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HISTORY OF THE CHURCH IN ENGLAND

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HISTORY

OF

THE CHURCH IN ENGLAND

FROM THE BEGINNING OF THE CHRISTIAN ERA TO THE ACCESSION OF HENRY VIII.

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BY

MARY H. ALLIES

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To the Martyrs of England.

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CHAPTER I.

THE CHURCH IN BRITAIN (A.D. 30-597).

THE visible things of God are to tell us of the invisible wonders of His Providence, and the Psalmist's *cœli enarrant gloriam Dei* may possibly only be laid bare at the Last Day. The disclosures of science come gradually in proportion as they are grasped by the mind of man, for in reality the facts so revealed are as old as the world. The plan of the universe is thus unfolded year after year, and the course of its unfolding suggests two thoughts: divine unity and infinite power. The millions of suns obey one law; the most distant star forms part of the sidereal system, and would cease to shine or even to exist apart from it. This magnificent unity points to the conclusion that God nowhere works without it, and that His revelation to man must necessarily be one. There cannot be two laws of gravitation any more than there can be two sidereal systems. So in the spiritual kingdom, of which the universe is but a pale figure, unity and truth are synonymous.

Before the Saxon era (449) we find in that part of Great Britain, which we now call England, a strong and vigorous people whose conquest had cost Rome

two centuries of warfare. Their history is written in their resistance, and it is typical of the race, which up to the days of Henry VIII. had never been enslaved. Boadicea and Caractacus were the heroes of that strife until at last Britain became an unromanised Roman province. It never surrendered its customs or characteristics: it tolerated a Roman wall, but never a Roman plough.

The conversion of a race so stubborn, so tenacious of national habits, so slow to unlearn, was a miracle of divine grace. How the good tidings reached Britain is a matter of conjecture, or rather perhaps of legend, for Britain's knowledge of the Christian religion is curiously revealed to us through its legends. The Celtic mind is eminently poetical, and instead of clothing facts in everyday garb, it sings them in an air with variations, after the fashion of the Celtic minstrel. Tertullian in the second, and St. Chrysostom in the fourth, century mention the sound which had gone forth to the far distant British Isles.[1] The Christian faith came either from the East or from Rome. Tradition says that Joseph of Arimathea, who had laid the Divine Body of our Lord in the sepulchre, came to Britain, and, with his companions, instructed its people in the Faith of the Crucified: that Glastonbury in Somersetshire was the spot he chose as the centre of his labours. The desire to claim one who had seen our Lord,

[1] *Adv. Judæos*, c. 7, quoted by Montalembert; *Les Moines d'Occident*, iii. p. 15, and St. Chrysostom, Ευρισκομενά, iii. p. 71.

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and touched His Divine Person, was surely prompted by a lively faith, and shared by other nations in their early enthusiasm. Glastonbury, its flowering thorn, the first church in England erected in honour of our Blessed Lady, in later times its famous monastery, may or may not be due to St. Joseph of Arimathea's apostolate. What they undoubtedly are is a witness to early Christian faith in the never-failing virginity of Mary, and to the ever-present power of God over nature, as symbolised in the thorn which flowers at mid-winter. The strength of a legend lies in its aptness to embody some thought suggested by faith, so that there is no need in this instance either to deny or to maintain but merely to give the legend for what it is worth, which is a great deal.

The second explanation of Britain's conversion is given by Venerable Bede. In the year 156, he says, under the Emperor Marcus Antoninus, "when the holy man Eleutherius was at the head of the Roman Church, Lucius, King of the Britons, sent a letter to him, entreating to be made a Christian by his order".[1] Instead of 156, the date of King Lucius' petition is somewhat fixed by the years of Pope St. Eleutherius—182-193. It took place between 182-193, if, in spite of modern criticism,[2] we may suppose Venerable Bede to have been correct as to the fact. Even if he were not, the value of his testimony

[1] *Historia Ecclesiæ Gentis Anglorum*, lib. i. cap. iv.

[2] Haddan and Stubbs reject the mission of Pope St. Eleutherius.

to the fountain head of Christianity is inappreciable. Tradition, at least, speaks infallibly when it says that a British kinglet sent to the Pope for instruction in spiritual things, and its full significance is apparent: the Pope alone keeps the deposit of the faith, and has it to impart. Lucius was a King of Britain, and the region of Llandaff seems to have constituted his kingdom. The Pope received the British envoys, Elvan and Medivin, with thanksgiving, and sent back the missionaries, Diruvianus and Fugatius, to preach the Christian faith to our distant island.

The persecution of Diocletian (303) left its impress on our land, and affords another proof of its Christian faith. To it we owe our protomartyr, the leader of a glorious band, which possibly is not yet complete. Alban, still a pagan, offered shelter from the bloody edict to a Christian cleric *(clericum quemdam)* out of natural kindness. The exhortations, and still more the example, of his guest, St. Amphibalus, won him over to the Christian faith. With him conversion meant martyrdom, for when the prefect heard where the priest, Amphibalus, was hiding, he sent soldiers to the house, and Alban, moved by a supernatural impulse, gave himself up in his guest's clothes, and was led before the judge. He was invited to offer sacrifice to the gods, the usual test imposed on the Christian hero. To own the true God at that tribunal was certain death, yet there was no equivocation about Alban's profession of

faith: "I am called Alban by my parents, and I steadfastly adore and worship the true and living God, Who created all things". In wrath at his refusal to sacrifice, the judge ordered him to be tortured, thinking to break his constancy by stripes if not by words; but the martyr rejoiced in his sufferings. Then he was condemned to be beheaded at a place beyond the river. The bridge across it was encumbered by a great crowd, so that Alban might have had to wait till evening for his crown. This he would not do, but upon his ardent prayer to God the river's waters parted, and he reached miraculously the spot where he was to suffer. The executioner, touched by the wonder, which was the instrument of grace for his own soul, laid down his sword at Alban's feet, conquered by his example to the Christian faith. Then he followed Alban to his crown. Alban was beheaded outside the town of Verulam, which he baptised with his blood and with his name. Some centuries later a great abbey rose on the spot. The martyr, who had so early gained his crown, sowed the ever-fruitful seed in our land. Others suffered in the same persecution, amongst them St. Julius and St. Aaron, citizens of Caerleon.[1]

According to Bede, it was about the year 394 that the Pelagian controversy respecting grace began to be mooted in Britain. Pope Celestine I. sent the deacon Palladius to the British bishops in order that the heresy might be rooted out. His mission met with

[1] *Hist. Eccles.*, lib. i. cap. vii.

no success. Then spiritual aid was sought from the Bishops of Gaul, and in 429 Germanus, Bishop of Auxerre, as the Pope's legate, and Lupus of Troyes arrived in Britain on this special embassy. The great Apostle of Ireland, St. Patrick, was in their company, and, says a modern historian,[1] he was not the last to whom the success of the mission should be ascribed. When Germanus had preached in a town, he was wont to ask his companions what means were to be employed to make his sermon fruitful, and Patrick would give the characteristic reply: "Let us observe a strict fast for three days at the city gate, and leave the rest in God's hand". They preached not only in towns, but in the open country, where the people flocked to hear them. The impulses of faith are ever the same. A blind girl of ten was brought by her parents to Germanus in order that he might cure her. After fervent prayer the bishop laid some relics, which he wore, upon her eyes, and she saw. Germanus was recalled to Britain in 448 for the same reason, and again he brought peace and a superabundance of interior life. Another miracle is recorded of him by Bede, in which he restored the use of his limbs to one doomed in the flower of his years to a hopeless infirmity.[2]

Britain was not contented with merely receiving spiritual favours from Gaul. When Saxon cruelty

[1] Bellesheim, *Geschichte der Katholischen Kirche in Irland*, vol. i. p. 32.

[2] *Hist. Eccles.*, lib. i. caps. xviii. and xxi.

was making itself felt with peculiar ferocity, in 450, a band of missionaries, escorting a whole population of men and women, left the shores of Wales in open boats made of skins sewn together, and landed in Armorica, the real Brittany of to-day. For a hundred years those missionaries toiled, and the result of their labours is felt even now in the strong Catholic faith of those regions. Neither Principality nor Power has been able to wrest the precious seed from Breton hearts, and this they owe to the exiled Britons. The chief apostles are sometimes called the Seven Saints of Brittany. They were all monks, and all canonised, and their names, besides being written in heaven, are part of the soil. Samson of Dol was the Metropolitan, with his six suffragans: Pol de Léon, Tugdual of Tréguier, Corentin of Quimper, Paterne of Vannes, St. Brieuc, and St. Malo.[1]

The missionary spirit existed, therefore, in no small degree amongst the Britons. How comes it, then, that they absolutely refused to enlighten the Saxons? In Armorica they were addressing themselves to a Celtic race, and it is certain that the Celt prefers to convert other Celts even in our own day. As a people they are peculiarly open to the influences of the national spirit.

God rewarded their love for the souls of Armorica by an increase of spiritual life and vigour at home. The very invasion under Hengist and Horsa (449), which had driven them away, was raging,

[1] *Moines d'Occident*, ii. p. 314. See chap. iv.

and compelling the countrymen whom they had left behind, to withdraw into the fastnesses of Wales. Strangely enough, more light is thrown upon the internal life of the Church during the following one hundred and fifty years, than at any other time. Two characteristics distinguished them: their saints and their religious houses. The single English monastery which survived Saxon atrocities was Glastonbury, although it was far from being the only English foundation. The glories of Llandaff, Bangor, and St. Asaph were founded by holy British confessors, whilst the names of St. David and St. Winifred are known beyond the confines of Wales, in the vast country of the Catholic Church. Dulricius (431-522) established the monastic life in Wales, at Llandaff. He became Bishop of Llandaff, and the cradle of the see was the religious house. Bangor on the Dee, with its 2100 monks, was another immense centre of Christian life. St. Kentigern (550-612) founded St. Asaph, that is to say, the later see rested on the earlier religious house, which was composed of 965 monks. Of this number, 865 were engaged in singing the divine office. St. Asaph, who gave his name to the see, was the successor of St. Kentigern.[1]

St. David, who died in 544, is the patron saint of Wales to this day. He is no legendary personage, full of legend as his history is. The same may be said of St. Winifred, the acts of whose martyrdom

[1] *Les Moines d'Occident*, iii. 44.

are some of the briefest on record. Indeed, they can scarcely be called acts. The story is that, in the sixth century, Winifred, a young and beautiful girl, was beheaded by King Caradoc for repulsing attentions which she could not accept without violating chastity.[1] She preferred to die, and that is the value of the legend. It is better to suffer death than to lose purity, and those who so suffer are dear to God, and powerful with Him.

Modern criticism, which discards legends, should have struck off from the list of past generations the famous King Arthur along with St. Winifred. He has no well to show for his existence. He is the embodiment of chivalry which never dies any more than chastity. It is said that he was both crowned (516) and buried (542) at Glastonbury.

But, perhaps, the most important fact in connection with the Church in Britain is the presence of three British bishops at the Council of Arles in 314. Though prior to some of the events above mentioned, it comes last in dignity, and shows that the Church in England was no more detached from the rest of Christendom than is England itself the only nation in Europe. The Council of Arles was not œcumenical although of the highest rank as a secondary council which represented the whole Western Church.

These bishops were Restitutus of London, Eborius of York, and Adelphius of Caerleon. They were

[1] *Les Moines d'Occident*, iii. p. 74.

probably metropolitans, which gives their appearance in history a further significance. The existence of a hierarchy points to a settled order of religious worship far ahead of Britain's then half-civilised state. It shows that where all else was discord, confusion, brutality, here at least, that is, amongst the Christian people, unity, peace, and joy were to be found. On hearing of the presence of a hierarchy, a thinking man will naturally ask himself: "Who introduced it?" It cannot stand by itself, but must be traced back to its source. Why, then, if British bishops held their consecration and jurisdiction from the crown of England, did they exist before it? Why, again, if they were only British bishops, did they think it necessary to attend a foreign council which was not British at all? They held a rank far higher than British prelates: they were bishops of the Universal Church, a country as large as the world.

Pope Silvester I. could not be present at this council, therefore the assembled fathers, amongst them these British bishops, sent him a letter telling him of their decrees, and asking him to communicate them to the rest of Christendom. They deplore his absence, which would have increased their joy, but they say: "You could not possibly leave that region where the apostles are every day present, and where their blood is ever witnessing to God's glory". The council, they tell the Pope, wished that "you who hold the greater dioceses should make its decrees

known to all".[1] This was in 314, nearly a century and a half before the Saxon invasion.

At the end of the sixth century, England had well-nigh fallen back into barbarism.[2] British Christians had mostly retired or been driven into Cambria, and in 586 the last survivors of the British Hierarchy, the Archbishops of London and of York, gave up the battle, and fled into the Cambrian mountains, carrying with them their relics and sacred vessels.[3] They had every reason to dread and dislike the Saxons, yet however great their provocation, they neglected the *ordo caritatis*, and refused to convert their conquerors. To them they showed a fierce spirit of nationality, which threatens, wherever it exists, to annihilate Catholic life.

The Celtic saints alone triumphed over this natural characteristic of the race. St. Columba evangelised North Britain, and was the apostle of the Northern Picts. Later on, his children exercised an immense influence on the Saxons, both in Northumbria and Mercia.[4]

Such anomalies are met by Divine Providence sometimes with foreign invasions, sometimes by the scourge of wicked rulers, sometimes by the violent upheaving of internal revolution, sometimes by allowing men to have their way, and to become

[1] *Sacrorum Conciliorum Collectio*, Mansi, ii. p. 469.
[2] *Les Moines d'Occident*, iii. p. 343.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 330.
[4] *Ibid.*

nationalists rather than Christians. This is what happened to the Britons. They preferred to be insular rather than Catholic, and allowed new missionaries the glory of enlightening the heathen darkness of the Saxons (597). As well might we talk of a star outside the sidereal system as of a national Church cut off from the rest of Christendom.

FIRST PERIOD.

FROM THE COMING OF ST. AUGUSTINE TO THE NORMAN CONQUEST.

(597—1066.)

CHAPTER I.

THE MESSENGERS OF PEACE (597—1066).

THE England to which the new missionaries came in 597 resembled the England of 1892 as the child foreshadows the full-grown man. After a hundred and fifty years of strife with the Britons the Saxons were at length taking root in the soil. They had brought in with them their ancestral gods, Woden, Thor, Friga and Sæter, and engrafted their Teutonic customs on the original Celtic stock. They had divided the land into eight small kingdoms, each independent of the other, in which the royalty was elective in certain families, and limited. Our modern counties retain vestiges of those Saxon principalities, and our parliament is the natural development of the witena-gemot. The Saxons were the fourth people in the field of Great Britain. Caledonia was inhabited by the Picts. There were the Northern Picts to the north of the Grampians, the ancestors of the present Highlanders. Their great apostle, St. Columba, went to his reward in the year 596. The Southern Picts, again, had been evangelised by St. Ninian. Their boundaries were the Forth and the British kingdom of Strathclyde, which extended to Glasgow.

A colony of Scots had early settled in Argyll and the Isles. They were from Scotia, the north of Ireland, and consequently Irish.[1] Iona was the great monastic centre founded by St. Columba, and was to the north what Canterbury became to the south.

History casts its broad daylight upon the Saxon conversion, and tells no more touching story. Slavery and its horrible disregard of human life was a passion with this Teutonic race. They bartered their own sons and daughters and little children for money, and enjoyed the traffic as if it had been a profitable game of speculation. Thus it was that the fair-haired strangers found their way to the Roman Forum, where, as they were waiting to be bought, they were descried by the Roman deacon,[2] Gregory, about the year 586. He was walking in the market-place, and was attracted by their appearance. To a southerner their fair complexions and sweet faces offered a type of spiritual beauty. He stopped to ask the seller of these beautiful slaves where they came from, and what their religion was.

The man replied that they were Angli, from Britain, where every one was fair, and that they were heathens. Gregory's comment has become historical: "That is well, for they have angelic faces, and they ought to be co-heirs of the angels in heaven". When he was told further that their

[1] Bridgett, *History of the Holy Eucharist in Great Britain*, i. 53.

[2] In this case his position of a Roman deacon was equivalent to that of a cardinal.

country was Deira, one of the two Northumbrian kingdoms, he said this name also was of good omen : *De ira eruti, ad misericordiam Christi vocati.*[1]

He paid the price demanded for these northern slaves, and took them to his father's palace, which he had already converted into a monastery, where he ministered to spiritual as well as corporal hunger. It has since been the church of San Gregorio on the Cœlian Hill. First of their race, these captive Northumbrians, rescued by Gregory, were baptised by him, and cared for with the most tender kindness. Gregory actually left Rome in order to convert the Saxons, but he did not then belong to himself. The indignant Romans appealed to the Pope, who yielded to their desire and ordered Gregory to return.[2] He never forgot the Angli, and at last Divine Providence gave to him what is not vouchsafed to all—the power to carry out his heart's desire. In 596, after long years of waiting, Gregory the Pope was able to send forth the good tidings to the Saxons. He selected men whom he had himself trained in his monastery on the Cœlian Hill. They were a band of forty monks, headed by Augustine, our future apostle, and would seem to have followed a special rule instituted by Gregory, probably on Benedictine lines.[3]

Gregory gave them letters to the bishops of Gaul,

[1] *Les Moines d'Occident*, iii. p. 348.

[2] *Vita Sti. Gregorii Magni*, Auctore Paulo Diacono, iv. p. 9.

[3] Lingard, *Anglo-Saxon Church*, i. p. 182.

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where they passed the winter 596-7. Their hearts failed them after they had put their hands to the plough. With very excusable shrinking from a heathen land, where all was unknown, they looked back to their quiet monastery on the Cœlian Hill. Gregory raised their drooping courage, and bade them be of good heart for the great undertaking before them. "It would be better," he wrote to them in 596, "not to begin a good work, than to renounce one already begun, even in thought."[1]

Gregory prevailed. His monks landed in the spring of 597 in the Isle of Thanet, at that time part of Cantia, or Kent, over which Ethelbert, grandson of Hengist, was reigning. The Frank princess, Bertha, was Queen of Cantia. The free exercise of her religion had been a condition of her marriage to Ethelbert, who was himself entirely ignorant of Christian truths. Never, perhaps, did pagan prince show more loyalty to Christian missionaries than Ethelbert. Augustine, bearing the cross and an image of our Lord, appeared before him, together with the other monks. The king had stipulated for an out-of-door meeting to counteract magical influences. When Augustine had expounded "the Word of life," Ethelbert made answer:—

"You speak and promise grand things, but because they are new and uncertain I cannot give my consent to them, and leave all that I and the whole nation of the Angles have observed for so long. Still, as

[1] *Hist. Eccles.*, lib. i. cap. xxiii.

you have travelled so far to us, and it seems clear to me that you have wished to tell us that which you believe to be true and best, I will not molest you. On the contrary, I will see that you enjoy a kind hospitality, and receive necessary food. Nor do I forbid you to gain as many as you can to your religion."[1]

Ethelbert meant what he said. He assigned the missionaries a dwelling-place, called Stable Gate, in his little capital, and they made a solemn entry into Canterbury. The church of St. Martin, just outside the town, had been built by Britons in Roman times. Queen Bertha had used it, and now Augustine and his companions hallowed it afresh with their prayers and masses.[2] Their life was so truly apostolical, and so fully bore out their teaching, that Ethelbert was soon won over to the "Word of life". He was baptised on Pentecost Day at St. Martin's, and on Christmas Day following 10,000 Kentish men received the sacrament of regeneration.[3] Ethelbert made over his royal dwelling at Canterbury to Augustine. Moreover, to the east of the city the king further bestowed on him a heathen temple and the adjoining land. Augustine converted the temple into a church, and laid the first stone of the religious house subsequently called St. Augustine's Monastery. The walls of Christchurch Cathedral rose close to the

[1] *Hist. Eccles.*, lib. i. cap. xxv.

[2] Bede uses the words, *missas facere*, lib. i. cap. xxvi.

[3] Bridgett, *History of the Holy Eucharist in Great Britain*, ii. 87.

royal palace.[1] Thus Canterbury, from being Ethelbert's capital, became the renowned metropolitan see of future times. Its great glories are due to an Italian monk, who brought us the blessed faith of Rome.

In this first year of his apostolate (597) Augustine received the plenitude of the priesthood, according to St. Gregory's parting orders. He was consecrated by the Archbishop of Arles, and became in virtue of the apostolic see first Archbishop of Canterbury. The hierarchy as intended by Gregory was to consist of a metropolitan see both in the north and in the south, with twelve suffragans to each. This scheme was carried out only in the course of centuries. The fact that London had been the metropolitan see of the south under the British hierarchy naturally suggested it again, but the primacy was speedily transferred to Canterbury, the true spiritual centre of the Saxons.

The pallium from Gregory accompanied Augustine's nomination to be Metropolitan,[2] and for nine hundred years it continued to be the privilege of English Metropolitans to receive it from the Successor of St. Peter as an outward token that their Jurisdiction with its privileges was conferred by him.

After his consecration, Augustine consulted Pope Gregory on a number of points relating to faith and discipline. "Whereas faith is one," wrote Augustine,

[1] *Les Moines d'Occident*, iii. 365, and following.

[2] *Ibid.*, iii. 383.

how was he to treat the different customs which he found in different places? One mass liturgy prevailed in the Roman Church and another in Gaul. Probably Queen Bertha followed the Gaelic use. Gregory, with that great breadth of mind as to details which is inspired by unity of dogma, bade Augustine to cherish any such customs just in proportion as they contributed to the greater glory of God. "Things are not to be loved for the sake of places, but places are to be loved for the sake of the good they offer."

"How," asked Augustine, "am I to deal with the bishops of Gaul and of Britain?" Gregory answered: "We have given you no authority over the bishops of Gaul, because since early times the Bishop of Arles has been wont to receive the pallium from our predecessors. We cannot therefore take from him the authority he has already enjoyed. . . . But," Gregory concluded, "we commit all the bishops of Britain to your fraternity, that the ignorant may be taught, the weak strengthened by counsel, and the perverse corrected by authority."[1]

The priesthood, which Pope Gregory thus committed to Augustine, was to be severed from the ties and cares of married life. "If there are any *clerici* not in sacred orders who cannot practise continence, they must marry and receive their salary apart from the altar."

Clerics were of two kinds: sacerdotal and those

[1] *Hist. Eccles.*, lib. i. cap. xxvii.

not in holy orders, and it is to these latter that St. Gregory here alludes.[1] They were neither priests nor deacons. A misconception of the word *clericus* has led to a good deal of confusion. All priests were clerici, yet a whole class of clerici were neither priests nor deacons. In their own tongue the Anglo-Saxons used the term mass priest to designate the priesthood. On the other hand, Bede, writing in Latin, speaks of a *clericus quidam* received by St. Alban. In this case the clericus was St. Amphibalus, who was undoubtedly a priest.[2]

St. Gregory rightly estimated what the combat of chastity would impose on a half-barbarous race. It was a principle with him, as with St. Augustine, who had turned from the broken cisterns to the Saviour's fountains, that happiness was exchanged, not taken away: *non subtrahuntur deliciæ sed mutantur*.[3] St. Gregory gave special directions as to the practical working of marriage, a question which is at the bottom of the whole social structure.

In 601, hearing that the harvest was fruitful in the land of the Angles, Pope Gregory despatched more missionaries, amongst them Mellitus, Justus, Paulinus, and Rufianus. Mellitus, who seems to have been Abbot of St. Andrew's Monastery on the Cœlian Hill, received on his journey a characteristic letter from the Holy Father. It refers to practices

[1] *Hist. Eccles.*, cap. xxvii. p. 47. See note.

[2] *History of the Holy Eucharist*, ii. 73.

[3] St. Augustine, *Præf. in Psal.* 74.

which are worth noting. "When, then, Almighty God takes you to our most reverend brother, Augustine the bishop, tell him the conclusion of my long cogitations in the matter of the Angles. This is that they are by no means to destroy the temples of the idols in that people, but let the *idols* in those temples be destroyed. Let there be holy water, and let it be sprinkled over those temples; let altars be constructed and relics placed there, for if those temples are well built, they ought to be cleansed from the worship of demons, and made to serve for the worship of the true God, so that those people when they see that their temples are not destroyed may be converted from the error of their hearts, and knowing and adoring the true God, may feel more at home in coming to their accustomed places of prayer. And whereas many oxen are wont to be slain for the sacrifice of demons, they should also change the solemnity in this particular as well. On the day of dedication or the feast-day of the holy martyrs whose relics are placed here they should make tents for themselves of boughs round these churches which were once temples, and keep the day with holy feastings. Instead of immolating animals to the Devil, let them kill these animals for their own food, and give thanks to the Giver of All for His plenty, that whilst they are having some external joy they may be more capable of feeling interior joy. For there is no doubt that it is impossible to cut off everything at one

stroke from ignorant minds, because he who strives after the highest place mounts up step by step, and not by jumps. Thus it was that the Lord made Himself known to the Israelites in Egypt, yet still He reserved for His own worship the use of sacrifices which they were wont to offer up to the Devil, so that He ordered them to immolate animals in His own sacrifice. Accordingly, in a changed heart, they were to give up part of the sacrifice and retain something else. Thus, if the animals they were wont to offer were the same, still, by immolating them to the true God, and not to idols, the sacrifices would *not* be the same."[1]

It would seem that Augustine found it easier to deal with the heathen than with the Britons. There can be no doubt that they were strong nationalists, and that they showed no sympathy with his efforts on behalf of the Saxons. Their narrow and insular prejudices, and worse still, their spiritual pride, strewed his path with difficulties. He himself was gifted with no ordinary prudence, and he had the wisdom of the Holy See, personified at that time by Pope St. Gregory, to fall back upon. The first objection which they raised was the attitude they were to assume towards the Roman missionary. Were they to receive him and make common cause with him? Were they, in short, to be Britons first and Catholics afterwards, or the reverse? Their national spirit

[1] *Hist. Eccles.*, lib. i. cap. xxx.

had assumed wide dimensions, which were shown in several points of discipline, to which they clung in spite of correction. In those days the difficulty of communication had tended to isolate them from the rest of Christendom, and had made them proportionately jealous of their own customs. Their time for keeping Easter and mode of administering baptism called for reformation as out of harmony with the Universal Church. The baptismal controversy soon dropped. It was not so with the Easter question, which, as Augustine had foreseen, led to very serious results in Colman's time, though the story as Bede tells it would almost make us exclaim of British obstinacy: *O felix culpa*.

The Nicene Council, to which the bishops of Britain gave their adhesion, decreed not only that the festival should always be kept on a Sunday, but also that, if the fourteenth day of the moon fell on a Sunday, the Pasch should be solemnised on the following Sunday. Practically they had neglected this decree, and kept the feast on the fourteenth day when it fell on a Sunday, though not otherwise. They were not Quartodecimans proper. They were merely Britons in a matter of discipline, which did not affect the faith, but which *did* interfere with the unity of Christian practice. The very insistence of Augustine in the matter would prove its importance to any one who had studied the man. By St. Gregory's orders, into which he entered heart and soul, he conceded all that he could. On the other

hand, the Britons were now to give the measure of their Christianity.

Between the years 599-603 Augustine summoned them to a conference at Austclive on the Severn, and entreated them to unite with him in one common endeavour to convert the Saxons. They did not keep the Lord's Pasch at the proper time, he said, and they did many other things (which are not specified) against ecclesiastical unity. Prayers, entreaties, counsels, reproaches, were all in vain. They preferred their own traditions to the Lord of the harvest, nor would they be persuaded even by a miracle, which is, I believe, a frame of mind proper to those whose evil will puts scales before their eyes. A blind man was brought, for whom the Britons could do nothing, but at Augustine's prayer he recovered his sight. This moved them to ask for a second conference, which might be more numerously attended by their representative people. No fewer than seven bishops and many learned men among the Britons, chiefly from their monastery of Bangor, which had Dinoth for its abbot, came to the second conference. First of all, records Bede, they consulted a hermit as to whether they should give up their traditions at Augustine's demand. "If he is a man of God, follow him," was the wise reply, to which the hermit would have done well to restrict himself. When they went on to ask how they were to discover Augustine's sanctity, he said, by his meekness and humility of heart. If he remained sitting when

they approached him, they were to conclude that he was *not* humble of heart, and to spurn him even as he spurned them. On their acceptance of this singular test depended more than their absolute refusal of grace. Augustine received them without rising from his chair, which, thanks to the hermit, made them perfectly deaf to all he had to say. He told them he asked only for three things: that they should celebrate Easter at the right time, fulfil the rites of baptism according to the custom of the holy Roman Church, and unite with him in trying to convert the Saxons. Nothing moved them. Then Augustine warned them that, because they would not preach the way of life to the Saxons, they, themselves, should suffer death at the Saxon hand. In 613, many years after Augustine's own death, Ædilfrid, the Saxon King of Northumbria, marched against Caerleon, the city of the Legions, which was also the metropolitan see of Cambria. Many monks of Bangor, after a three-days' fast, appeared on the battle-field, to fight by their prayers. "If," said Ædilfrid, "they are calling upon their God against us, they are fighting against us indeed, although they may not bear arms;" and he directed that they should be struck down first of all. Twelve hundred of them perished, and thus Augustine's prediction was accomplished.[1]

Augustine did not long survive these conferences, which brought him so much bitter disappointment.

[1] *Hist. Eccles.*, lib. ii. cap. ii.

In 604 he consecrated two bishops, in order to strengthen the Christian inheritance, Mellitus for London as the centre of the East Saxons, to whom he was to preach, and Justus for Rochester. He died in 605;[1] but the Gospel seed scattered by his hand had taken strong root: the words of St. Gregory, spoken in the Roman market-place, were to be accomplished.

[1] *Moines d'Occident*, iii. 415.

CHAPTER II.

"NOT ANGLI BUT ANGELI" (605-655).

We have now to follow two separate currents. The tide of Christian life had set in at Canterbury and in its immediate neighbourhood, and penetrated as far as London, where Mellitus, the disciple of Augustine, was laboriously building up his see. Canterbury, Rochester, and London were the first fruits of Gregory's hierarchy, the shadow of a great Rock in a desert land. From Canterbury, as the chief focus, rays of light were disseminated throughout the country, according to the graciousness of pagan rulers and the zeal of the Roman missionaries. Much indeed depended on both, and this was plainly proved when not only the apostle of the English had gone to his reward, but when the protecting arm of his royal convert, King Ethelbert, was withdrawn by death in 616.

Augustine's successor as second Archbishop of Canterbury was St. Laurence, 605. The illicit marriages of the Saxons were a subject of constant strife, because of protest on the part of the missionaries. Ethelbert's successor, Eadbald, would not receive the Christian faith, nor its morality, and contracted

marriage with his father's widow, his stepmother. In the meantime the position of Mellitus in the capital of Essex, our London, was no easy one. Saberct, their king, had become a Christian, but he had followed Ethelbert to the tomb, leaving three sons, who, unruly pagans themselves, wanted to taste the bread of Christians, because it looked white and appetising. Curiosity took them to Mellitus' church during the celebration of Mass.[1]

"Why will you not give us the white bread you gave to our father Saba, and still continue giving to the people in the church?" were their angry words to Mellitus.

"If you will be washed in the saving water with which your father was washed," was his reply, "you also may become participators of the sacred bread which he ate: but if you despise the fountain of life, you are by no means fit to partake of the bread of life."

"We will not go into that font," they said, "because we know we need it not, but we want to be refreshed with that bread." Mellitus persisted in his refusal and these king's sons in their demand, till at last in their anger they ordered the uncomplying bishop out of their kingdom because he would not give them the "small thing" which they desired.

In the lifetime of Saberct, Bishop Mellitus laid the corner-stone of London's two great cathedrals, dedicated to those chief apostles whom St. Chrysostom

[1] "Celebratis in ecclesia missarum solemniis" are Bede's words.

called "the two eyes of Rome".[1] The church of St. Paul rose on the site of a temple of Diana, to the east of his episcopal town, our huge London, whilst he founded to the west the abbey church of Westminster. St. Peter took the place of Apollo. A beautiful legend is connected with the beginnings of Westminster. According to it, a fisherman whose boat was moored across Thorney Isle, as it was then called, ferried an unknown traveller to the Westminster side on the night before the consecration. The traveller directed his steps to the new church, the fisherman followed. No sooner had they entered it than a flood of light illuminated the building. The astonished fisherman heard, as it were, the voices of angels, and smelt a heavenly fragrance. "The new bride of God," says a chronicler, "being consecrated by him, who opens and closes heaven, is resplendent with heavenly light."

After all was over, the venerable fisher of men returned to the fisher of fish, and said: "I am he whom Christians call the Apostle St. Peter. I have this night dedicated my church to God, which my friend, Saberct, built for me."[2]

Westminster was founded in 610, but now, 616, Bishop Mellitus was much in the position of the fisherman of the legend after the consecration. All the lights had gone out and it seemed as if St. Peter and his Lord had withdrawn from the kingdom.

[1] *Leaves from St. John Chrysostom*, 222.

[2] *Les Moines d'Occident*, iii. p. 431.

Mellitus returned to Canterbury and conferred with Laurence and Justus. Their hearts were sore: they were weary of the rough heathen plough to which they had put their hands, and no Gregory was there to raise their drooping courage. They all resolved to retire from the country, and to go to a place where they could securely serve God. Mellitus and Justus carried out their determination, and reached Gaul, from whence they awaited the course of events. The metropolitan was about to do the same; but during what he meant to be his last night at Canterbury—he spent it in the monastic church of SS. Peter and Paul (St. Augustine's)—he received a severe intimation from St. Peter himself not to weary in well-doing. Modern incredulity may smile at Bede's sober account of the scourging inflicted by St. Peter on the archbishop, but the history of our island's conversion was materially affected by it. Something out of the common took place, which changed Laurence's intention of departing. The next morning, "invigorated by St. Peter's stripes and exhortations," he went to the king and showed him the marks of the apostolic bruises. Who had ventured so to beat the archbishop? inquired Eadbald. When he heard that St. Peter had inflicted the scourging in the cause of his own salvation, he renounced his idols, gave up his illicit connection, and began to walk in his father's footsteps as far as the faith was concerned. He recalled Mellitus and Justus, but his power was not so great as Ethel-

bert's, and he could not replace Mellitus in his see on account of the prevailing idolatry amongst the Saxons of Essex.[1]

Such, then, was the strength of the citadel in the enemy's country. We may judge from this of the dreary wastes outside, and not wonder if the ardent Roman spirit drooped over the enterprise.

In the days of the Heptarchy,[2] Northumbria, which comprised the modern counties of Northumberland, Durham, and York, and all the south-eastern part of our present Scotland, was divided into two kingdoms — Deira and Bernicia. When united under one sceptre, as sometimes happened, Northumbria was the largest kingdom of the Heptarchy. In 626 Edwin was sole king of Deira and Bernicia. He had received baptism from St. Paulinus, a companion of St. Augustine, who had accompanied Ethelbert's daughter to the north. This princess, as the bride of Edwin, needed the ministry of Paulinus, who was to fortify her by the daily celebration of mass and the administration of the sacraments. The Saxon princesses, indeed, were a factor in the conversion of the country. St.

[1] *Hist. Eccles.*, lib. ii. cap. vi.

[2] Kingdoms of the Heptarchy :—

1. Cantia.
2. Wessex.
3. Sussex.
4. Mercia.
5. Essex.
6. East Anglia.
7. Northumbria { Deira. Bernicia.

Gregory's plan had been to revive the metropolitan see of the north, York, and to institute twelve suffragans. Paulinus was first Archbishop of York in St. Gregory's hierarchy. The capital of each small kingdom usually suggested the see. As long as the spiritual and the royal power were in harmony the harvest promised well; but the case of Ethelbert and Eadbald repeated itself all over Saxon England. A neighbouring king, Penda, a heathen, and Cadwallon, a Briton, whose Christianity was merged in his nationalism, made war upon Edwin and defeated him. Edwin fell upon the battle-field in 633, and with him the fruits of St. Paulinus' ministry seemed to pass away. It was only apparent, for if Paulinus did not build the temple, he gathered together the stones. Two sons of Edwin received their father's inheritance, and to increase it they gave up their Christian birthright, but they did not endure in the land. When their short-lived prosperity was over, Oswald, who was of the royal blood, conquered and took possession of the kingdom, 635. Bede lingers with special fondness over Oswald, whom he calls a "man dear to God". Oswald had received the Christian faith from the monks of St. Columba, which inclined him to turn to the same church for a missionary bishop. Aidan of Iona, therefore, succeeded to the labours of Paulinus, and consolidated them during King St. Oswald's reign of nine years. St. Aidan was the first Bishop of Lindisfarne, out of which the see and palatinate of Durham

arose.[1] Many touching and beautiful stories are told of the truly royal Oswald and of the truly episcopal Aidan. Amongst others we read of a dinner at which Aidan was present. A silver dish was set before the king, and all were about to partake of the feast when the minister charged with the poor came to tell the king that a great multitude of beggars were outside asking for alms. Oswald ordered the silver dish to be broken and divided among them. Aidan, in a moment of enthusiasm at the noble deed, grasped the king's right hand, exclaiming: "May this hand never wither," and, adds Bede, the wish was fulfilled, for although Oswald, like Edwin, fell a victim to the Mercians, his right hand and arm, even severed from his body, remained uncorrupt. Yet more. On the spot where he fell cures of sick men and sick beasts took place without ceasing, so that many gathered up the dust of that hallowed place, and mixing it with water gave it to their sick whom it was wont to alleviate.[2] The body, which had worked for God, was glorified by Him, now by a supernatural light over its resting-place, now by its power over the demons, and still more perhaps by the piety it inspired. "Nor is it wonderful," says Bede, "that the sick are cured at the spot where he died, who in his lifetime never ceased to think of

[1] *Registrum Palatinum Dunelmense.* Edited by Hardy, Preface, p. 1.

[2] *Hist. Eccles.*, lib. iii. cap. vi.

the sick and the poor, to give alms and to be helpful."[1] The saints continue in death the wonders of their life.

Redwald, King of East Anglia, which kingdom comprised Norfolk and Suffolk, had been baptised in Kent, probably during Ethelbert's reign, but had never grasped the Christian faith in his life. Felix, a Burgundian bishop, succeeded in converting this people (630). He built churches, and King Sigbert, a brother of Redwald, founded a seminary. "This king," says Bede, "became so great a lover of the heavenly kingdom," that he finally laid down his crown and entered a monastery which he had built. He had persevered for a long time in this life when it happened that the Mercians, under their king Penda, declared war against East Anglia. Sigbert's people clamoured for their familiar leader, and dragged him in spite of his resistance to the din of battle. He would no longer fight, but held a wand in his hand as a symbol of his new life. He was slain 636, and succeeded by King Anna.[2]

The East Saxons, who had shown signs of grace under Saberct and Bishop Mellitus, and then fallen away under the rude influence of his pagan sons (616), did not find a second apostle until thirty-seven years later. In 653 St. Cedd, brother of St. Chad, converted great numbers, and was consecrated bishop by St. Finan of Lindisfarne. He often

[1] *Hist. Eccles.*, lib. iii. cap. ix.

[2] *Ibid.*, lib. iii. cap. xviii.

visited Northumbria, as his spiritual home, and was on terms of intimacy with Oidilwald, King of Deira, the son of St. Oswald. Oidilwald offered him some land in Deira for the construction of a monastery, and there Cedd instituted a house of strict observance according to the Lindisfarne rule. Oidilwald looked upon this monastery as a great gain to himself on account of the prayers which would be offered up for him by its monks.[1]

The West Saxons also had their apostle, one distinguished for his devotion to the Body and Blood of our Lord. This was St. Birinus, who came to Britain by counsel of Pope Honorius, in 632. He had promised the Pope to scatter the seed of the faith in a new region, but finding the West Saxons still "most pagan,"[2] determined to devote his ministry to them. Their king, Cynegil, was baptised with his people. St. Birinus fixed his see at Dorchester, Oxon, which was probably the capital of the West Saxons. He died after many labours, and was buried at Dorchester. In 683 Bishop Hedde transferred the see to Winchester, together with the body of St. Birinus, which now rests in Winchester Cathedral.[3]

Penda, King of Mercia, had long been a terror to his neighbours. He it was who had overthrown Edwin, Sigbert, and Oswald. In the year 653 his

[1] *Hist. Eccles.*, lib. iii. cap. xxiii.

[2] *Ibid.*, lib. iii. cap. vii.

[3] *Ibid.*

son, Peada, was courting the daughter of Oswin, successor to Oswald. The princess resisted his advances because of his paganism, and his passion led him to study the Christian religion. He procured missionaries from Northumbria, and was baptised by St. Finan. Penda himself never received Christianity, though he openly expressed his contempt for those who, having done so, continued to live as pagans. St. Chad was the principal apostle of Mercia, and his little church of St. Mary the nucleus of the future cathedral and see of Lichfield.

The South Saxons were the last member of the heptarchy to be converted. They gloried in their idols, and laughed to scorn those whom they called apostates. They required no fewer than three factors to bring them into the Church. These were the example of their king, Ethelwald, who had received baptism in Mercia; an exiled bishop—no other than St. Wilfrid; and a famine, during which he reached their souls through their bodies. These events took place in the year 681. When once begun, their evangelisation was speedily accomplished. Ethelwald made over to Wilfrid the promontory of Selsey, where he founded a monastery and see, which was afterwards removed to Chichester.

By the end of the seventh century the Saxons with their heathen temples were converted to Christianity, and they themselves as a people were about to carry

out St. Gregory's words: "You shall be no longer Angli but Angeli". A barrister has no right to briefs till he is called to the bar: neither may a priest use the awful power given to him by Holy Orders until authorised. The Pallium confirmed the primate in his authority, and was an earnest to him of his right to "call" others. This was expressed by Pope Boniface V. to Justus, Archbishop of Canterbury, in 624: "Moved by kindness, we have addressed by these presents the Pallium to your fraternity, the use of which we have conceded to you only in celebrating the sacred mysteries, granting to you further the ordination of bishops in the mercy of the Lord when it is required. Let your fraternity, then, try to keep with sincerity that which you have received from the goodness of the Apostolic See."[1]

First of all, the Angles had received the "sacred mysteries," which act of worship Bede faithfully records of Augustine and his companions at St. Martin's. The very name used by our forefathers to denote the Blessed Sacrament was full of meaning. They called it the Housel, which is derived from the Greek *θυσία*, a sacrifice. "Before their conversion they used the word *husle* to denote a victim of sacrifice, and after their conversion transferred it to the Christian sacrifice of the Mass."[2] Holy Communion was administered to the faithful under both kinds during all the Saxon period, but

[1] *Hist. Eccles.*, lib. ii. cap. viii.

[2] Lingard, *Anglo-Saxon Church*, i. 298.

the notion that one of the sacred species, taken alone, did not contain both the Body and Blood of our Lord, was absolutely unknown. In the year 686 a grievous sickness was raging in many parts of the heptarchy. At length it reached St. Wilfrid's monastery of Selsey. The monks resolved to stay the Divine arm, if possible, with a three-days' fast, or else to secure through their penance the eternal salvation of their souls. A little boy, who was a recent convert, fell sick. As he was lying in bed, the princes of the apostles appeared to him, telling him to be of good heart. They had come, they said, to take him to heaven, and he should be the only victim to the disease. First, however, he was to be fortified with the Holy Viaticum. At Mass time "a particle of the same sacrifice" was carried to the sick boy, who died that day.[1]

The "sacred mysteries" were committed to the guardianship of priests, just as their ordinaries were entrusted, under St. Peter, to the metropolitan. The Vicar of St. Peter issued the briefs, whilst the provincial synod or council, which was held twice a year, dealt with local ecclesiastical and sometimes with secular business.

In 631 Pope Honorius, drawing out a rule for future times when the two metropolitan sees should be fully established, ordained that, in case of death, the surviving archbishop should consecrate the new metropolitan, so that the long journey

[1] *Hist. Eccles.*, lib. iv. cap. xiv.

to Rome might be avoided.[1] Besides increasing or limiting (as the case might be) the authority of the pastors the Popes sent letters, and sometimes presents, to the kings who had so large a share in the transformation of the "Angli" into "Angeli". The zeal of Ethelbert and his queen, Bertha; later on of Edwin, King of Northumbria, was thus rewarded by the Father of all Christians.

The Catholic Faith was not all that the Saxons owed Pope St. Gregory and his Italian mission. Augustine and his companions brought books to the Angles, and the house which he founded at Canterbury became a celebrated school of learning. The Abbot of St. Augustine's enjoyed singular privileges, and the monastery itself was known as "the Roman Chapel in England". A catalogue remains of the books thus sent to us by a Pope in 601 through the Abbot Mellitus, his second envoy. They were a Bible in two volumes, a Psalter and a Book of the Gospels, a Martyrology, the Apocryphal Lives of the Apostles, and Commentaries of certain Epistles and Gospels.[2] A little later Lindisfarne and Malmesbury, offshoots of Celtic origin, emulated the example of Canterbury. Canterbury gave the impulse and the Roman tone. The studies there comprised "grammar—that is, Latin and Greek; geometry, arithmetic, music, mechanics, astronomy, and astrology". The origin of both Oxford and Cam-

[1] *Hist. Eccles.*, lib. ii. cap. xviii.

[2] *Christian Schools and Scholars*, i. 91.

bridge Universities is traced by some to the traditions founded by this school.[1] In after years, when St. Wilfrid had received all that Lindisfarne could give him, he went to Canterbury to learn the Psalter according to the Roman version.[2]

The call to follow the counsels of perfection springs from the sacred mysteries. The Anglo-Saxons practised them very early in their spiritual career. They were a great contrast to ourselves, who so seldom, relatively speaking, give a king's daughter to God. It is true that kings are scarcer, but the impulse which led the Saxons seems to be expressed by the adage *noblesse oblige*. The royal and the noble amongst men and women made themselves essentially so by giving up all outward goods in order to become more perfect lovers of God and of eternity. Before Augustine's time the higher life was practised in the Cambrian monasteries, and in Caledonia by the monks of St. Columba. It was usual also for men who aspired to close union with God to become hermits.

Augustine himself gave a great impulse to monasticism, and about the year 640, Bede tells us that many, in their longing for the religious life, sought for it in Gaul, few monasteries being at that time built in the region of the Angles. Earcongota, daughter of Earconbert, King of Kent, found this refuge beyond the seas, at Faremoutier. Besides

[1] *Christian Schools and Scholars*, i. 100.

[2] *Ibid.*, i. 97.

Faremoutier, Chelles and Andeli were much frequented by Saxons, who were thus desirous of a conventual life, not then to be easily enjoyed in their own country.

They also entrusted the education of their daughters to nuns, and sent them far away to be fitted for the Heavenly Bridegroom.[1] Earcongota's stepmother was another of these royal ladies; her body was found perfectly incorrupt seven years after her death. The example of Sigbert, King of the East Angles, is recorded even earlier, in 636. It will be remembered that he was called to the battle-field from his peaceful monastery, but that he would no longer hold weapons in his hands. An Irish monk, or as he would then be called, a Scot, came to the kingdom of East Anglia from Ireland during Sigbert's reign. This was St. Furseus, a man whose conversation was truly with the angels. The very holiness of these Pict and Scot missionaries lent weight to certain Celtic traditions, which were now as the shadow of a cloud on the ecclesiastical horizon. For a time, in the North, Iona practically exercised the influence of the Metropolitan See, which the Pope had assigned to York. Its church sent out missionaries, holy and zealous men, but even the very best of them, as, for instance, St. Aidan, held to the British time for celebrating Easter in opposition to the Roman custom. About 634 we find Pope Honorius addressing a letter to

[1] *Sponso Cœlesti copulandas mittebant.* lib. iii. cap. viii.

the Scots on this very matter, exhorting them "not to deem their littleness, situated at the ends of the earth, wiser than the churches of Christ, whether ancient or modern, throughout the world".[1] The Iona tradition was finally suppressed about the year 715, owing to the exertions of Egbert, a holy English missionary.[2]

This difference is, in reality, a proof of unity, for if historians, or rather the chief historian, St. Bede, took the trouble to record it so particularly, we may gather what he would have said about a controversy in dogma. Evidently he considered the smallest difference an evil, as, at any rate, a possible danger, to the unity of the whole body.

It has been shown how the vengeance of God, foretold by Augustine, fell upon the Britons, who declined to unite in his spiritual labours for the Saxons. About sixty years after his death, in 664, the crisis which he had foreseen came to pass. Matters on the subject of the Easter controversy were brought to an issue simply because it was found that confusion, in a point of discipline, would soon lead to confusion in dogma.

[1] *Hist. Eccles.*, lib. ii. cap. xix.
[2] *Ibid.*, lib. v. cap. xxii.

CHAPTER III.

THE FIRST OF AN INVINCIBLE RACE (664—709).

I TAKE the history of a typical man to illustrate that of his time, for no less an authority than M. de Montalembert has called St. Wilfrid of York "*Le fils aîné de cette race invincible, le premier des Anglais*".[1] These words seem to imply that he was the first of his race because he was invincible. An intense love of justice and a noble independence of character, together with a great zeal for the beauty of God's house both outwardly and in the secret of human hearts, were Wilfrid's characteristics. He was born in 634 of Northumbrian parents. Already in his youthful years he showed the tendency of his people. He was no home-keeping youth. After spending some years with the monks of Lindisfarne—he was sent to them at fourteen by Queen Eanfled—he expressed a wish to go to Rome. His eager spirit longed for wide horizons, and his soul for the shrine of the blessed apostles. He reached at length that far-off object of his desires, and received a Roman training as a preparation for his priesthood. On his return

[1] *Les Moines d'Occident*, iv. p. 386.

to Northumbria he entered the household of Prince Alchfrid, a son of Oswy, King of Northumbria (658). Soon afterwards he was ordained priest, and it is in the perfection of his years and mind, a Roman spirit grafted on the strong Saxon nature, that he comes before us at the Whitby Conference.

Oswy, a worthy successor of St. Oswald, had inherited his kingdom, and his friend, St. Aidan. The traditions of Iona, that is, of St. Columba, respecting Easter prevailed at court as far as the king was concerned, but his queen, Eanfled, was a Kentish princess, who conformed to the teaching of the Roman missionaries. So it came to pass that Easter was kept twice a year at court, and that whilst the king was rejoicing, the queen and her party were still fasting. Colman was Bishop of Lindisfarne after St. Aidan and St. Finan, who had both held strenuously to the Celtic tradition. The Paschal observance, together with other questions of ecclesiastical discipline, were now seriously considered. Men feared that through want of this outward unity they had accepted the Christian name in vain.[1] Oswy, therefore, proposed to hear what both parties had to say, and to follow that tradition which most commended itself as the true one. Three elements were distinguishable at the Conference: the royal, the Columban or Celtic, and the Roman. "Both Kings came to it," says Bede, that is, Oswy and Prince Alchfrid; "the bishop, Colman,

[1] *Hist. Eccles.*, lib. iii. cap. xxv.

with his priests from Ireland; the priests Agilbert, Agatho and Wilfrid." The queen's chaplain, Romanus, was on the Roman side, whereas the Abbess Hilda and her nuns and Bishop Cedd were with the Irish.[1] Hilda's double monastery, overlooking the sea, was the place chosen for the Conference. On the opening of proceedings, Colman was ordered to state his case.

"I have received," he said, "this Pasch from my superiors who sent me here as a bishop. All our fathers, men beloved of God, are known to have kept the same. And lest any one should think to reject and despise it, this Pasch it was which we read of the blessed Evangelist, John, the Lord's favourite disciple, having celebrated in all the churches of his jurisdiction." Colman added more words to the same effect. It was now Agilbert's turn, but he suggested that Wilfrid, being an Angle, should act as his spokesman.

Thus spake Wilfrid: "We have seen our Pasch kept by all in Rome where the blessed Apostles Peter and Paul lived, taught, suffered, and were buried: the same we saw kept in Italy and in Gaul, which we passed through for the purposes of learning and of prayer. This we find done at one fixed time by Africa, Asia, Egypt, Greece, and the whole world, wherever the Church of Christ is spread, by all nations and tongues. I must make an exception only for the Picts and the Britons and their com-

[1] *Hist. Eccles.*, lib. iii. cap. xxv.

plices in obstinacy, who, belonging to two islands at the ends of the earth, and not possessing all even of them, strive in vain against the whole world."

Colman's argument was the sanctity of those who had founded and followed the Celtic usage, and in this he has had many imitators.

"Would you venture to say that our most reverend Father Columba and his successors, men dear to God, liked or did what was contrary to the Scripture?" he asked. Then Wilfrid, as Roman spokesman, showed the true bearing of the question. It was not because saints had taken a certain line that, therefore, it was the right one, yet he did not deny that they *were* servants of God and dear to God. But no saint would wilfully persist in what he knew to be less perfect, and he did not blame those Celtic teachers for an observance which was prompted by ignorance. "But as for you and your companions," were his concluding words, "if, hearing the decrees of the Apostolic See, or rather of the Universal Church, you treat them, though ratified by Scripture, with contempt, you are most certainly committing a sin. For, even if your fathers *were* saints, is their small number in a remote island to be preferred to the Universal Church of Christ throughout the world? And if that Columba of yours, or rather of ours, if he belonged to Christ, *was* holy, and strong in virtues, could he be preferred to the most blessed Prince of the Apostles to whom our Lord said:—

"'*Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build My*

Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it, and I will give thee the keys of the kingdom' ?

"'Is it true, Colman, that this was said to Peter by the Lord?' asked King Oswy.

"'Yes, it is true, O king,' said Colman.

"'Can you bring forward any equivalent proof of power bestowed upon your Columba?'

"'No, we cannot,' was the truthful reply.

"'Do both of you agree unanimously that this was said to Peter in particular, and that the keys of the kingdom were given to him by the Lord?'

"'Most certainly.'

"'Well then I tell you that I will not venture to put myself against the keeper of the keys. As far as I know and am able, I wish to do his pleasure in everything, for fear that if the known keeper of the keys is against me, there should be no one to open to me when I get to the door of heaven.'"[1]

These royal words settled the dispute as far as the Angles were concerned. Cedd and the Abbess Hilda proved themselves open to conviction. But Colman preferred the tradition of his countrymen, and retired first to Iona and then to Ireland, with his party, carrying with him a portion of the bones of St. Aidan.[2] Tuda, likewise an Irish monk, succeeded him as Bishop of Lindisfarne.

At the time of the Whitby Conference, 664, Wilfrid was thirty years old. With his defence of St.

[1] *Hist. Eccles.*, lib. iii. cap. xxv.

[2] *Ibid.*, lib. iii. cap. xxvi.

Peter's rights began the vicissitudes of his life. Tuda died of a pestilence very shortly after the Whitby Conference. Thus the largest Anglo-Saxon see, that of Lindisfarne, which, in the practical non-existence of York, comprised all Northumbria, again became vacant. Wilfrid was naturally pointed out as Tuda's successor, but his nomination was a further confirmation of his victory at Whitby. He had to pay a heavy price for it all the rest of his life. Many of those who had yielded intellectually to the Roman question, still belonged to the Celtic party in sympathy. Hilda seems to have been among the number.[1] The bishop-elect, out of his great loyalty to the Apostolic See, preferred to receive his episcopal consecration in Gaul from the hands of his old friend, Agilbert, now a bishop. Wilfrid's long absence in Gaul favoured the machinations of his enemies. They circumvented Oswy, who regretted Wilfrid's election, and so far forgot himself as to allow Chad to be intruded. On his return Wilfrid found Chad in possession of his see, and retired to the monastery which he had established at Ripon, through the generosity of Prince Alchfrid. He bore patiently this first act of gross injustice, and bore it for three years, 666-669, for it was only rectified by Archbishop Theodore when he came to Northumbria. By the authority of the Apostolic See Theodore re-established Wilfrid in his diocese, and Chad became Bishop of Lichfield in Mercia, 670.[2]

[1] *Moines d'Occident*, iv. p. 186. [2] *Hist. Eccles.*, lib. iv. cap. iii.

King Oswy died in 670 and was succeeded by his son Egfrid, whose queen was St. Ethelreda. In obedience to a powerful inspiration of divine grace, she had always been faithful to her vow of virginity, and Wilfrid, her confessor, not only encouraged her to persevere in spite of the king's remonstrances, but sanctioned her flight from the court when she at length succeeded in getting some kind of consent from Egfrid. The queen's final retreat was Ely, where she founded a double religious house, and continued to be fortified by the advice and support of Wilfrid. The king never forgave Wilfrid for upholding Ethelreda in her love of chastity. It was however more than a mere attraction. Wilfrid believed that Ethelreda had never given her consent to marriage, and on this ground alone he stood by her to the utmost of his power. For years Egfrid nourished his grievances, and when at last he married Princess Ermenburga of the West Saxons, he provided himself with an instrument of revenge. Ermenburga called the king's attention to Wilfrid's splendid position, to his riches, and to the influence which he exercised. Her words enkindled the smouldering flame. The king and queen resolved to break the bishop's great power by calling in Archbishop Theodore, Wilfrid's official superior. Theodore came again to Northumbria in 678, during a temporary absence of Wilfrid. It is probable that he was thinking chiefly of his own policy and that he was not influenced by personal animosity. A particular

line of conduct carried out in spite of all obstacles, whether offered by men or things, has an appearance of harshness. However that may have been, Theodore was bent on dividing existing dioceses and on forming new sees. Consequently he put three bishops into Wilfrid's place: Bosa for York and the Kingdom of Deira, Eata for Hexham and for Bernicia, and Eadhead for the province of the Lindissi (Lincolnshire) newly conquered by Egfrid. The injustice inflicted by Theodore's anointed hand was the bitterest of all. In vain did Wilfrid protest against an act which ejected him from his own bishopric. His remonstrances were laughed to scorn. Then he appealed above his metropolitan to the tribunal of St. Peter.

The snares laid by Wilfrid's enemies on his Romeward journey nearly proved fatal to Wynfrid of Mercia, who, also deposed by Theodore, was likewise appealing to the Holy See. *Errore bono unius syllabæ seducti*, says Wilfrid's friend and biographer of his enemies,[1] they seized Bishop Wynfrid at Estaples, despoiled him of all he possessed, whilst the real Wilfrid found his way to Rome and laid his cause before Pope Agatho.

The Pope charged fifty bishops and priests sitting at the Lateran, to hear it. The words of Wilfrid's petition are memorable. "I, Wilfrid, humble and unworthy bishop of the Saxons, have sought refuge here as in an impregnable fortress. With God's

[1] *Les Moines d'Occident*, iv. 263.

help I have climbed up this apostolic hill from which the vigour of the holy canons is poured forth on all the churches of Christ. I have already explained by word of mouth and by writing, how without committing any wrong, I was turned out of the diocese which I had been governing for ten years, and how not one bishop, but three bishops, were put in my place."[1] Whatever happened, were the closing words, Wilfrid would obey the apostolic decrees.

Judgment was given in favour of Wilfrid. He was to be restored to his bishopric, and the intruded bishops were to be expelled, but, in favour of Theodore's policy, Wilfrid was to choose coadjutors among his own clergy so as not to govern so vast a diocese alone. With this document the courageous bishop returned in 680 to Northumbria. He was to reap no personal benefit from it, for the anger of kings is worse than death. In this case it was injustice. The papal mandate produced no effect upon Egfrid and his queen, except to embitter them the more. Wilfrid was cast into prison, and stayed there nine months, resisting every manner of threat, and every specious argument which was used in order to induce him to admit that his sentence had been unfairly gained. At the end of this time through the mediation of a friendly abbess he was allowed his liberty on condition that he would leave Northumbria for ever.

[1] *Les Moines d'Occident*, iv. 271.

He went forth, his ardent spirit still unquenched, first to Mercia, then to the West, and afterwards to the South Saxons, where at last he was beyond the reach of Egfrid's anger. His reverses served as the instrument of grace for this people, who were the last to surrender their paganism. It will be remembered that the king, Edilwalch, made Wilfrid a gift of Selsey, where he followed the bent of his heart in building a monastery. He drew to himself great love and great hatred. It was at this time that he secured the friendship of an exiled prince. Caedwalla, of the royal line of Cerdic, remembered Wilfrid when he came into his kingdom, and gave him a fourth part of the Isle of Wight.[1]

In the light of his last years, Theodore expressed great sorrow for his injustice to Wilfrid. A full personal restitution was no longer in his power, but he did what he could by writing in Wilfrid's favour to the Kings of Mercia and Northumberland. "May God and St. Peter forgive you all our controversy," said Wilfrid, whose generosity bore no malice.[2]

"Wilfrid's old enemy, Egfrid, was slain in battle in 685, and the reign of Aldfrid began with fair promise for the exiled bishop. He was restored to his full episcopal authority, and exercised it, though not in joy, for five years. His monastery at Ripon, the gift of Prince Alchfrid, was the first in the north to

[1] *Life of St. Wilfrid*, Series of English Saints, p. 141.

[2] *Les Moines d'Occident*, iv. 305.

follow St. Benedict's rule. It was in the endeavour to recover its revenues that he once more encountered the royal enmity. Again men clamoured loudly at his ambition and love of money, and it ended by Aldfrid's demanding the possession of Ripon. Wilfrid refused to comply, but he understood that his life was not safe, and once more fled the kingdom. He took refuge in Mercia, and spent nine years in this new exile, strong in the encouragement he received from Pope Sergius. Brithwald, the successor of Theodore, summoned a council at Nestrefield in 703 at the instigation of Aldfrid. Wilfrid was invited to attend, and to make known his grievances. He went, but found no justice. The bishops were king's men, who wished to bind Wilfrid by oath to their judgments in his regard, whatever they might be. He would pledge himself to nothing beforehand, except to obedience to the canons and to the Apostolic See. His persistence angered them so much that they pronounced him despoiled of all his possessions in Northumbria and Mercia. As a final concession, they offered him his own monastery at Ripon, provided he would remain there until the end of his life, and renounce the exercise of his episcopal charge. Once more Wilfrid's ardent spirit was thoroughly roused, and since he could not get justice from his own king or metropolitan, he appealed to a "higher tribunal".

"I appeal, with all confidence, to the Apostolic See. Let the man who wishes to depose me accom-

pany me thither to that judgment,"[1] were his spirited words. More spirited were his deeds, for meekness is not weakness. Submission to unlawful demands is an act which sometimes falls heavily on a whole generation. Again he set out for Rome, in no way deterred by the fact that now, as before, his enemy was his own metropolitan. He was seventy years old at the time of his third journey to Rome.

After a detailed hearing of his case during four months, John VI. delivered judgment in favour of Wilfrid. No single accusation made against him was proved. The intruded bishops were to accept the terms of a council, which Wilfrid was ordered to convoke, or else to plead their cause personally at Rome.

Peace was finally made without King Aldfrid, whose enmity lasted till the very eve of his death, when he at length expressed a desire to be reconciled to the much-injured bishop. The death of Bishop Bosa placed John in the see of York, and Hexham was the diocese finally assigned to Wilfrid.[2] If any are tempted to regard his life-long struggle as useless and vain, let them weigh its results. During all the Saxon period it would seem that no metropolitan again attempted to depose a bishop unjustly.[3] In an island far removed from the spiritual centre of gravitation, imperious kings may aim at making

[1] Faber, *Life of St. Wilfrid*, Series of English Saints, p. 162.

[2] *Les Moines d'Occident*, iv. 350.

[3] Stubbs, *Constitutional History*, i. 221.

the universal Catholic birthright a mere national appendage, whilst the dangers of Erastianism and arbitrariness no less beset metropolitans.

Wilfrid settled the question of appeal for every member of the Catholic hierarchy in England. If it had not been for the Keeper of the Keys, he, a bishop, would have suffered a burning injustice with no power of redress.

CHAPTER IV.

NOONDAY (700-800).

THE time which immediately followed the conversion of the Saxon kingdoms was remarkable for almost fulfilling Pope St. Gregory's words: "You shall be no more *Angli* but *Angeli*". The people were fervent, the pastors were saints. Kings, when not pursuing personal animosities, were consumed with zeal for the glory of God's house. In the heptarchy itself the predominance of power was in the North, where the King of Northumbria, especially when the sceptres of Deira and Bernicia were united in one, was a greater man than the King of Kent. Northumbria and Mercia divided pre-eminence between them until the reign of Egbert, in 800, who broke up the heptarchy, and founded the glory of the West Saxons.

Mercia distinguished itself in holiness as well as prowess. The son of the terrible Penda married St. Ermenburga, and was father to three saints, Milburga, Mildreda, and Milgitha. The fragrance of holiness was wafted all over the land, but perhaps it was specially noticeable in the more northern sees. If the Kentish and Mercian princesses sought out the mortification of Jesus in their mortal bodies, the

pastors of the North, both in number and in degree, seem to have borne off the palm of confessorship. So many holy hands and hearts were at work that, after Bede's example, the historian must be allowed to linger for a while on those life-giving and life-inspiring deeds.

Before entering upon those histories, we should notice the forces which were in the field. Two men, both saints, St. Wilfrid and St. Bennet Biscop, had introduced into England what may be called the roller of monastic life, I mean the rule of St. Benedict, which, as a subtle refiner of men, has undoubtedly been a great factor of civilisation. Yet Wilfrid's championship of the holy see, his sufferings for justice sake, have set a special mark on him apart from monachism. If he appealed to Rome in the interests of justice, Bennet Biscop had recourse to it in the cause of piety and civilisation. In him, as in Wilfrid, there was the instinct of wider horizons. He wished, Venerable Bede says, to study the religious life at its source, and to put his countrymen in possession of the most perfect existing discipline. Born of noble Northumbrian parents, he set out in 653, at the age of twenty-five, on his journey of devotion and investigation, stopping on his return at Lérins (*ad insulam Lirinensem*), where he gave himself up to the exercises of religious life. At the end of two years he was "again conquered by the love of St. Peter,"[1] and visited Rome a

[1] *Bedæ Historia Abbatum*, sec. 2, p. 317.

second time. He accompanied Theodore, Archbishop-elect of Canterbury, to England in 669, and became Abbot of St. Peter's monastery in that place. Then he undertook his third Roman journey, when he seems to have gathered together a store of heavenly erudition and of holy relics, with which he returned to his native country. He found favour in the eyes of King Egfrid, who gave him land on which he began to build his monastery at Wearmouth in 674. He went himself to Gaul for masons in stone (cæmentarios), who should build his church in honour of the Roman Peter, and within one year from its foundation Mass could be said in Bennet's monastery.[1] He introduced, likewise, from Gaul, the art of glass-making, which was utterly unknown in Britain. But certain things there were which he could not get even from Gaul, and for these the "indefatigable provider" went to Rome. They were, first, an innumerable quantity of books; secondly, relics of the blessed apostles and martyrs, which were to bring much grace to numerous churches of the Angles; thirdly, John, the Archcantor of St. Peter's, whom Pope Agatho ceded to Bennet, in order that he might instruct the Angles in the Roman method of chanting and ministering at the altar; fourthly, a papal letter, conferring protection and immunity on the new monastery in perpetuity; fifthly, pictures of holy images for his church, *viz.*,

[1] *Historia Abbatum*, sec. 5, p. 319.

of our Blessed Lady, the holy apostles, of the gospel history, the apocalypse; so that all those who entered in should, in whatever direction they cast their eyes, have food for reflection, even if unable to read.[1]

A second grant of land from Egfrid enabled Bennet to build another monastery. This he founded at Jarrow in 682 in honour of St. Paul, and made Ceolfrid its abbot, who, "at the proper time," repaired to Rome, both to acquire knowledge at its spiritual source and to satisfy his own devotion.[2]

Hexham and Ripon, the monasteries of Wilfrid, Wearmouth and Jarrow, the foundations of Bennet, were therefore four great centres not only of Benedictine life, but of the intellectual effort of those rude times. William of Malmesbury says of St. Aldhelm, Bishop of Sherborne, that men ran to him from all parts, some in search of holiness, some in their desire to study.[3] Aldhelm introduced this rule into his monasteries at Frome and Malmesbury, and kings seconded his zeal. Ina of the West Saxons and Ethelred of Mercia gave grants of land "for the benefit of their souls"; and when Aldhelm also visited the central shrine of Christendom, Pope Sergius, in the name and place of St. Peter, ensured the spiritual existence of these houses, and placed

[1] *Historia Abbatum*, sec. 6, p. 320.

[2] *Ibid.*, 321.

[3] William of Malmesbury, *De Gestis Pontificum*, p. 344.

them under the immediate jurisdiction of the Holy See.[1]

Very early in the day, as I have said, Saxon princesses and women showed aspirations after the higher life. Before the close of the seventh century royal maidens of Kent were no longer obliged to go beyond the seas in search of a convent. Indeed, the monastery of Barking dates as far back as 660. It was built by St. Erconwald, Bishop of London, for his sister Ethelburga, who was first abbess. According to the Saxon custom, the foundation was a double one, for men and women, whose respective enclosures were strictly apart and equally under feminine jurisdiction. The letters of St. Aldhelm and St. Boniface speak of many devout women as serving God in convents. Ina, King of the West Saxons, had a sister, Cuthburga, who was married to Alcfrid of Northumbria, and afterwards retired first to Barking and then to Wimborne, where there was a double monastery, founded in 705. The Abbess of Barking and many of the sisters were slain by the Danes in 870; but the house lasted till the suppression under Henry VIII. St. Cuthburga's royal brother, King Ina, is a landmark in Saxon history, and will be mentioned later. Penda the terrible was the founder of a "chaste and renowned generation". Through his son Merewald he was grandfather to three saints, Milburga, Mildreda, and

[1] William of Malmesbury, *De Gestis Pontificum*, p. 352.

Milgitha.[1] Wulphere, his son and successor, married a saint, Ermenilda, and had a saint for a daughter, St. Wereburga.[2] In the north, the great double monastery of Whitby was made famous by St. Hilda, a princess of the royal blood.

At Coldingham (in Berwickshire) Ebba, King Egfrid's aunt, was abbess, and she it was who received his queen, Ethelreda, after twelve years passed as his queen, not as his wife. The history of Ethelreda has surely no parallel. A daughter of King Anna, she was married first to a local prince of East Anglia, but under protest, as she was always faithful to her vow of virginity. Egfrid was her second suitor. Her relations forced her into an unwilling marriage with him, deeming that the most powerful prince amongst the Angles should not be refused. During twelve years Ethelreda resisted all the king's advances, and still kept her vow. Wilfrid was the director of her conscience, and he encouraged her in what must be regarded as a strange and unusual vocation. In vain did Egfrid press his suit, and seek to influence Ethelreda through Wilfrid. At last the queen obtained a half consent to leave the court, and hurried to Coldingham, but could not abide there, although Wilfrid sanctioned her conduct by giving her the veil. The king pursued her, and Abbess Ebba counselled flight. The fugitive queen wandered as far as Ely, where she held property from

[1] *Acta Sanctorum Ordinis Sti. Benedicti.*

[2] *Les Moines d'Occident*, v. 285.

her first husband, and there she founded a monastery, which afterwards became as renowned as any in the kingdom, 672. Sixteen years after burial the body of Wilfrid's royal penitent was discovered to be free from all traces of corruption, and to possess healing powers for spiritual and physical infirmities.[1]

Jarrow was not slow to produce a perfect type of the Benedictine life. If its soil had yielded only Bede, it would have been sufficiently fertile. This man of singular and attractive holiness was accustomed to the yoke from his earliest years, which, as he tells us, he passed at Jarrow, for at the age of seven (679) his parents made him over to the care of the abbot, Bennet Biscop. The study of Scripture and the service of the altar were the occupations of his life, and moulded his mind. In his history of the Church he discloses the higher qualities of the historian, perhaps the highest of all: he is essentially a lover of truth for its own sake. If he is not up to the standard of modern criticism, that is because our modern critics, in their fear of believing too much, minimise the power of God, and reduce His action in human things. The dates of Bede may occasionally be erroneous, but he never allows his readers to think bad good or good bad. His proportions are right, so that it is a matter of less consequence if his details are at times faulty. The historian, for whom truth is a dead letter, reverses the case, and gives us splendid details. Only his basis is defective. He

[1] *Hist. Eccles.*, lib. iv. cap. xix.

departs from a wrong standing-point, neither beginning from truth nor going to truth, and so his picture of life must inevitably reproduce things and men not as they are, but things and men as he sees them. Bede kindles the torch of faith, and illumines the dark corners which baffle the unbelieving historian. In that light his pages teem with supernatural occurrences. Modern criticism is content to smile at them because it dwells in a lower atmosphere, and cannot breathe in the temperature of those higher regions where faith, that is, truth, reigns supreme. An important place is assigned to Bede's commentaries, as they are constantly used by the Universal Church in the pages of the Roman Breviary. He died in 735. With his failing breath he dictated the last sentences of St. John's Gospel, which he was translating. Then he said: "Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost," and so expired. Perhaps in no life does the Benedictine watchword *Pax* find a happier illustration, yet Venerable Bede was only one amongst many who was moulding the mind and heart of Saxon England.

Cuthbert was likewise training it heavenwards by the holiness of his life. We are accustomed to think of him as a bishop, but, as a matter of fact, he was essentially a monk, a man of contemplation before all things. He was in possession of the See of Lindisfarne only two bare years, from 685 to 687, and then sought out again the solitude of his

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monastery, as the best preparation for death, which he knew to be imminent. At Mailros[1] and Lindisfarne Cuthbert was a monk of striking holiness, and a monk he would have remained had not the voice of the people proclaimed his merits at the Synod of Twyford, over which Archbishop Theodore presided. As Abbot of Mailros Cuthbert had exercised a very powerful influence over the neighbouring country. The ministry in the hands of a saint is a fruitful source of miracles, and any one who has known the difficulty of reclaiming even one hardened soul will appreciate Bede's testimony to Cuthbert: "So great indeed was his eloquence, such his fervour of persuasion, so shining the light of his angelic countenance, that no one present dared conceal from him the hidden recesses of his heart. One and all they made an open confession of their sins, because they deemed that nothing could escape his knowledge, and they wiped away what they had confessed with worthy fruits of penance, as he commanded them."[2] Between his missionary labours whilst at Mailros and his consecration came his retirement at Farne, where he spent many years, looking up at heaven, the only point he could see from the elevation of his cell,[3] the one abode of his desires. During his episcopate the impression he made on others was

[1] Also called Melrose. It was a Celtic foundation. Its site is still known as Old Melrose. *Les Moines d'Occident*, iv. 56.

[2] *Hist. Eccles.*, lib. iv. cap. xxvi.

[3] *Ibid.*, lib. iv. cap. xxviii.

due to the personal example he set of the doctrine which he preached. Mortification and recollection in God were specially his gifts, and Bede says: "When he offered up to God the sacrifice of the saving victim, it was not with a loud voice, but with an abundance of heartfelt tears".[1] The wonders of his death equalled those of his life: his body, incorrupt in the tomb, was regarded with special veneration and interest. The shrine of the saint was plundered and demolished by Henry VIII. in 1540, but the body itself was reburied in Durham Cathedral. A mystery now rests over the exact spot where the body, once so honoured, lies.[2] The manner of St. Cuthbert's episcopal consecration has been quoted as a semi-royal nomination to spiritualities, but it must not be forgotten that it was sanctioned by Theodore, who had received his orders, jurisdiction, and every other faculty that belonged to him as metropolitan from Rome.

St. Chad, Bishop of Lichfield, St. John of Beverley, St. Erconwald of London, and St. Aldhelm, first Abbot of Malmesbury, afterwards Bishop of Sherborne, were amongst the first fruits of sanctity which the Saxon Church produced at this time. The missionary spirit was represented by Winfred, better known as Boniface, the great apostle of Germany, whom the Angles in the first flush of their own fervour had the glory of giving to their sister nation.

[1] *Hist. Eccles.*, lib. iv. cap. xxviii.
[2] *Life of St. Cuthbert*, Consitt. See chap. xi.

In 655 for the first time a Saxon was elected to St. Augustine's chair. He took the name of Deusdedit. It was, however, his successor Theodore who left the deeper impress on the Angles. Theodore was commended to Pope Vitalian by the monk Hadrian as a man suitable to govern the Church in England. Circumstances proved the value of his choice. Theodore showed a leading and an organising spirit; he moulded ecclesiastical discipline, which took from him consistency and shape. He came to the infant Church of the Angles at the age of sixty-six, bringing with him a deep knowledge of canon law and a long experience of Catholic traditions (668). Of blameless and holy life, his conduct to St. Wilfrid is the single reproach which rests on his memory. His policy was to increase the number of sees, and to strengthen, by councils held at stated times, the governing hand of the bishops in its action upon faith and morals. The Council of Hertford was summoned by him in 673, and as the first gathering of any kind among the Saxons is worthy of some notice. "In the name of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, who reigns for ever, and governs His Church," are its opening words, "it has seemed good to us to come together according to the custom of the ancient canons in order to treat of business which is important for the Church. . . . I, Theodore, elected though unworthy by the Apostolic See Bishop of the church of Canterbury, and our brother-priest, the most Reverend Bisi, Bishop of the East Saxons, to

whom was joined through his legates our fellow-priest and bishop, Wilfrid, Bishop of the Northumbrian people. Our fellow-priests and brothers, Putta, Bishop of Rochester; Leutherius, Bishop of the West Saxons; and Wynfrid, Bishop of Mercia, were also present."

Theodore's disciplining hand is apparent in the following articles, which he declared specially applicable to the Angles :—

I. That we all keep the holy day of Easter together on the Sunday after the fourteenth moon of the first month.

II. That no bishop is to invade the parish (*i.e.*, diocese) of another, but to be contented with his own people.

III. That in the case of monasteries dedicated to God, no bishop is to disturb them in any matter, nor to take away by force any part of their property.

IV. That the monks themselves do not roam from place to place, that is, from monastery to monastery, except by the permission of their own abbot, but remain in that obedience which they promised at the time of their conversion.

V. That no cleric leaving his own bishop shall roam about anywhere at his pleasure, nor, if he comes anywhere, be received without the commendatory letters of his prelate. And if, when once received, he refuses to return when summoned, both the receiver and the person who has been received shall incur excommunication.

VI. That wandering bishops and clergy be content with the hospitality freely offered them, and that no one of them be allowed to perform any sacerdotal office without permission of the bishop in whose diocese he is known to be.

VII. That the synod be assembled twice a year, but since divers hindrances are in the way of this, all agreed that we should meet once a year on the 1st of August at Cloveshoe.

VIII. That no bishop shall set himself above another out of ambition, but all shall acknowledge the time and order of their consecration.

IX. That as the number of the faithful increases the bishops be increased in number, but on this point, for the time being, we settled nothing.

X. As to marriages, that no one be allowed to have any but a lawful marriage. Let no one commit incest, let no one leave his wife, except, as the Holy Gospel teaches, because of fornication. If any man shall dismiss the wife joined to him in lawful matrimony, and wish to be truly a Christian, let him not marry any other, but remain as he is, or be reconciled to his wife.[1]

The bent of Theodore is clearly shown in these articles, which all, except one, regard discipline rather than morals. In 680 Theodore presided over another council held at Hatfield, called by him as a protest against the Eutychian heresy, which had been condemned at Chalcedon. The Pope's repre-

[1] *Hist. Eccles.*, lib. iv. cap. v.

sentative was John the Precentor. He was to "inquire into the faith of the Angles, and to take back a report of it to Rome". His judgment was entirely favourable, for *it* was delivered though not by himself. He died in Gaul on his way to Rome.[1] The wide field of Church discipline represents, however, only a portion of Theodore's labours. The Penitential Code, which bears his name, will be an illumination to those who view the human race as retrogressive. The Code reveals the special tendency of the time, which, in one sense, is that of every age. Christian purity is always arduous for the majority, though whether uncouth heathens have more difficulty in engrafting it on their coarse nature than effete Christians have in retaining it, is very doubtful.

Brithwald, a monk of Canterbury, succeeded Theodore in 690, from which date the line of archbishops became Saxon.[2]

St. Paulinus, first Archbishop of York, had taken the Pallium away with him on leaving Northumbria, and the metropolitan see of the north was revived only in 750 under Egbert. The use which even Theodore made of his undivided authority proves the wisdom of his own policy against the over-concentration of power: whilst he applied it to suffragan bishops, Rome applied it to metropolitans. After Theodore's death discipline—and as a natural con-

[1] *Hist. Eccles.*, lib. iv. cap. xviii.

[2] *Florentii Wigorniensis Historia*, 42.

sequence morals—became greatly weakened. Boniface, the great Saxon Apostle of Germany, had heard of the general degeneracy. As Archbishop of Mainz he called together his suffragans, and wrote, in the name of all, letters full of apostolic zeal to Ethelbald, King of Mercia, and Cuthbert, Archbishop of Canterbury. Chastity and the giving to God that which is God's formed the theme of his admonition to Ethelbald. He began his letter to Cuthbert by giving him an account of his own synod. "These things we decreed in this our synodal assembly, and we declared that we would preserve the Catholic faith, and unity, and subjection to the Roman Church, to the end of our life; that we would be subject to St. Peter and his Vicar; that we would hold a synod every year; that the metropolitans should apply to the same see for their Palliums, and in all things should strive to follow canonically the precepts of St. Peter, in order that they may be numbered among the sheep entrusted to him; and this confession we all consented to and subscribed, and sent to the body of St. Peter, the Prince of the Apostles." He goes on to give various regulations passed concerning the duties of bishops. The metropolitan is to watch over all, and in cases where his authority is insufficient, he is to refer the matter "always faithfully to the Apostolic See and the Vicar of St. Peter". The warnings of Boniface resulted in the Council of Cloveshoe in 747, one of the most important synods held in Saxon times. Its articles fully

bear witness to the decay of virtue and discipline of which Boniface had heard. He thought it necessary to suggest a special prohibition against women undertaking the pilgrimage to Rome.[1] The abuse of a thing proves its frequent use.

At Cloveshoe measures chiefly concerned those consecrated to God either in religion or in the world. Religious had fallen from their first fervour and required even to be admonished against the besetting Saxon sin of drunkenness, whilst the ignorance and want of zeal in the pastors are apparent.[2]

Wilfrid's victory at Whitby in the cause of St. Peter may be taken as an illustration of the Saxon love and reverence for the Prince of the Apostles. It was a marked feature from the first. The Saxon looked Romewards as to his spiritual home, the resting-place of Peter, but he did more, for all through the Saxon period Rome was the chief pilgrimage known to our ancestors. No fewer than eight kings undertook a journey, of which in these days of rapid travelling we can literally form no conception. Ina, King of the West Saxons in the beginning of the eighth century, is said to have been the originator of the Romescot, better known to us as Peter's Pence. It was the fine of a silver penny levied on every family possessed of land or cattle to the yearly value of thirty pence, which custom undoubtedly prevailed for a long time previous to the

[1] Flanagan, *History of the Church in England*, vol. i. p. 156.

[2] Hefele, *Concilien Geschichte*, vol. iii. p. 527.

Norman conquest. The tradition, which couples this institution with the name of King Ina, is rejected by Lingard. According to him its origin is buried in obscurity, only the practice was there, and must have been established by the royal authority. Under Edward the Elder, the Romescot is mentioned not as a new thing but as a due. Ethelwulph, the father of King Alfred, distinguished himself by devotion to the Holy See. During his year's stay in Rome he made magnificent presents to the Pope, and distributed gifts in St. Peter's basilica to the clergy and people of Rome with a royal lavishness. By will he bequeathed 300 mancuses to be sent yearly to Rome: one hundred for the Pope's personal use, one hundred to supply oil for the lamps in St. Peter's at the evening and midnight service on Easter Eve, and one hundred for the same purpose in the church of St. Paul.[1]

Gregory was still living for the Angles in the solicitude of his successors. In the year 787 Pope Adrian despatched his legates, whose names have been preserved, to renew "the faith and peace which St. Gregory had sent by Augustine. They were worshipfully received." Bishop Gregory of Ostia and Theophylact of Todi were the first messengers sent by Rome since Augustine's time. They caused two synods to be held, one in Northumbria under Archbishop Eanbald of York and King Alfwald, the other immediately afterwards in Mercia under King

[1] Lingard, *History of the Anglo-Saxon Church*, vol. i. p. 260.

Offa. The same twenty articles, imposed by the Papal legates, were laid before each. Offa took advantage of the opportunity to sever himself from the spiritual jurisdiction of Canterbury. Pope Adrian, led by his representations, appointed a metropolitan for Mercia, fixing his see at Lichfield, but this privilege ceased on the death of Offa in 803.[1]

It is a simple thing to give the facts, dry or stirring as they may be, which are only the outlines of history. As we could not judge of a landscape, however beautiful, without its colouring, so we must let the bright sunshine illumine the field of the past, and make its dry bones live. If the land of Cuthbert and Chad, Aldhelm and Erconwald, Ethelreda and Guthlac lived, for a time at least, in that purity of heart which sees God, let its supernatural brightness be taken into account. As I have said, Bede seemed to live in a different world to the nineteenth century, but the atmosphere which he describes is that of the Church at all times. Now, as then, she has her holy pastors, who cure the spiritual and physical infirmities of their flock, her religious living only to God, her nuns beginning already the angelic life of contemplation. Yet some who are only slightly versed in the secrets of holiness may think that Bede laid on his colouring with too lavish a hand, and this would be true if miracles were to cease with the Apostles and not rather to constitute an ever-present element in the organism of the Church.

[1] Hefele, *Concilien Geschichte*, vol. iii. p. 596.

Three supernatural features, so to speak, are noticeable in Bede. 1st. The veneration and the healing power he attributes to the bodies of the saints. To choose only a few instances of this, I may mention his account of St. Chad and St. Erconwald after death. Of St. Chad, who died in the year 672, he says that both in the place where his body first rested, and in that to which it was translated, "frequent" miracles took place. He mentions the case of a mad man, wandering on a certain evening to the church where Chad lay buried, of his staying there all night, with or without the knowledge of its custodians, and of his being in his right mind in the morning, to the great joy of all. Furthermore, the tomb was so constructed as to have a hole in the wall, into which the devout could thrust their hand and gather up some of the dust within. This, mixed with water, was wont to cure both men and beasts.[1] Of St. Erconwald he says that his shrine was cared for by his disciples, and that contact with it constantly cured the sick. Not only were those who touched the tomb healed, but bits of wood and mortar which were taken from it produced the same effect.

The story of Imma and Tunna, two brothers in Northumbria in the second half of the seventh century, illustrates the power of the Holy Sacrifice over the living and the dead. It is one of many told by Bede, but it is, perhaps, the most striking which he

[1] *Hist. Eccles.*, lib. iv. cap. iii.

has to relate on the subject. In 679 King Egfrid of Northumbria was at war with Ædilfrid, King of Mercia. In the battle which was fought between them, Imma, a young noble of Northumbria, remained wounded on the field. He lay for a day and a night amongst the slain. At last he came to himself, bound up his wounds as best he could, and managed to get away in the hope of securing friendly aid. In doing this he was captured by the enemy, and questioned as to his identity. Fearing to betray himself, he pretended to be a poor peasant, and that his wife was following the army in order to pick up a living. This story was believed by King Ædilfrid's general, who received him into his house, and dressed his wounds. When Imma began to recover, the general or earl, as Bede calls him, ordered that to prevent his escape by night he was to be chained to the spot. But some hidden power was at work. No sooner had those who bound him departed, than his chains fell off.

In the meantime, Imma's brother, Tunna, who was abbot at a place in the neighbourhood, came to search for his brother on the battle-field. He found a corpse which he believed to be that of Imma from its remarkable likeness to him, and took it reverently to his monastery. Then, after the last rites had been performed, he offered up frequent masses for the departed soul. We are told that God receives all prayers for the dead *per modum suffragii*. Tunna's masses were applied to his living brother: they

shattered the chains which imprisoned not his spirit but his flesh. In answer to his keeper's inquiry why he could not be bound, and whether he had any charms about him which broke the power of the chains, Imma replied: "I am ignorant of such devices, but I have a brother, a priest in my province, and I am sure that, believing me to be dead, he often offers up masses for me; and if I were now in the other world my soul would be freed from suffering through his intercession".[1]

When Imma recovered, he was sold to a certain Frisian. Then, as before, chains were powerless to bind him. His new master resolved to give him his liberty if he could purchase it. This Imma did, returning to his own country, *viz.*, Northumbria. Then the brothers met, and Imma ascertained that his surmises had been correct. His chains had been wont to fall off at the hour of his brother's mass. "He understood," remarks Bede, "that all other pleasant and prosperous things which had happened to him in his perilous state had been granted to him from on high by the fraternal intercession and the oblation of the saving Victim. Many men on hearing Imma's story were incited to pray with faith and devotion, or to give alms, or to offer up to God the Victim of the saving oblation for the deliverance of their departed friends, for they understood that the Holy Sacrifice was powerful to bring about the eternal redemption of both body and soul."

[1] *Hist. Eccles.*, lib. iv. cap. xxii.

Bede's third supernatural feature is characterised by his account of the man who came back from the dead, and was allowed to remember what he had seen in the other world. He was a married man in Northumbria, who was leading a virtuous life with all his household. He fell sick, and growing rapidly worse, expired one evening in the first hours of the night. At dawn the dead man sat up and began to speak. The watchers by his bedside all fled in terror except his wife. Her love, which was stronger than death, kept her pale and trembling at her post.

"Do not fear," he said to her, "for I am really raised from the dead and allowed to live once more amongst men. My life will no longer be what it was, but something very different." He proceeded at once to carry out his intentions. After spending some time in prayer, he divided all his substance into three portions: one for his wife, one for his children, and one for himself. He distributed his own portion to the poor, and obeying what seems to have been an irresistible call to the higher life, left his wife and children to become a monk at Mailros. Previously he had been a good man, but now he embraced holiness with all his soul, and began to practise the austerities of the saints. One of his penances, a favourite one in those days, was to stand in frozen water up to his neck. His answer was invariably the same when those about him expressed wonder at his being able to bear cold so

severe and to practise chastity so vigorous. "I have felt sharper cold," or, "I have seen harder and severer things".[1]

The vision of eternity had been burnt into his soul.

Modern scientists may smile at Drythelm's story, and say that of course he was in a trance or a state of hypnotism. But that may not be quite the point. If God did no more than send him a forcible dream about eternity, it is valuable to have it recorded so as to have the construction which those ages put upon the Scripture words *nothing defiled can see God*. How far different would be the experience of a modern *hypnotisé*. It is doubtful whether God would even enter his mind.

The noonday brightness of the Saxon Church soon reached its zenith, and long before the reign of Egbert there were signs of decay. Whether, as often happens, the outward scourge was a token of the inward falling away, is not perfectly clear, but it is certain that the Danish invasions and the terror they occasioned had a most disastrous result on faith and morals. The Danes were a Scandinavian tribe, who, full of pagan cruelty, thirsting for blood, and perfectly at home on the sea, would swoop down at their caprice upon any shore from Iceland, and even the coast of North America, to the Straits of Gibraltar and the Balearic Isles. Lindisfarne was a place of peculiarly holy memories. It was there, in 793, that these ruthless men of

[1] *Hist. Eccles.*, lib. v. cap. xii.

the North first appeared, and made a visitation which became a sort of precedent for a long series of outrage, blood-shedding, and sacrilegious desecration.[1] Nothing was spared at Lindisfarne. The monks were put to death, cast into the sea, or carried off into a barbarian slavery worse than death. As the priest Alcuin wrote to the king and chiefs of Northumbria: "Either this is the beginning of a greater trouble *or the sins of the inhabitants have drawn it upon them*". An atmosphere of perpetual fear has a discouraging effect on men at large. For one or two heroes it makes hundreds of cowards. King Alfred was, indeed, a host in himself, and he was mainly produced by the Danes, but how many blood-stained, smoking ruins, which too often typified spiritual havoc, have we not to set against the great Saxon prince?

The reign of terror inaugurated by the Danes at Lindisfarne in 793 lasted with intermissions until the reign of Canute. During that period scarcely a great religious centre escaped. The same horrors were everywhere perpetrated by barbarians whose sole end was plunder. Destruction was their weapon unto this end. The results produced by the terrible Dane were analogous to those brought about in the Middle Ages by the Black Death, which decimated monasteries, struck down the fervent, and often left the more commonplace spirits to grapple with unusual difficulties.

[1] Flanagan, *History of the Church in England*, vol. i. p. 182.

Similarly, under the Danish scourge, vocations declined, and discipline was relaxed before the noonday brightness had passed away. Still, it was only at a later time that the worst effect of mingled terror and weakness asserted itself. "For three hundred years after St. Augustine's time," says Lingard, "there is no mention of a married priest in any document."[1] Perfect continence had been the inheritance bequeathed to God's priests among the Angles by the great Pope St. Gregory, and preserved intact among them, as far as earthen vessels can keep the heavenly treasure, up to the end of Alfred's reign. Under his successors there were instances of married priests, and this falling off is traceable to the dearth produced by the Danish invasions. The ranks of the mass-priest had become so thinned in consequence of Danish violence that the *clerici* not in Holy Orders, who were always allowed to marry, had under pressure of circumstances been, in many cases, raised to the priesthood without the precautions which would have been required by full discipline. In their ordinary course, the canons prescribed that men so ordained should part from their wives, and keep the solemn promises of their priesthood. Whether from emergency or negligence this engagement may have been overlooked; it certainly was disregarded, so that by degrees instances of non-continence became common enough to defy the laws. Those who had married before orders

[1] *History of the Anglo-Saxon Church*, vol. ii. p. 252.

were, strictly speaking, the only married ones, for there was no legal form by which, when once ordained, a mass-priest could be married. From first to last the thing was a terrible abuse, tolerated in the beginning through dearth of priests, and existing in spite of the canons. St. Dunstan waged war against it to the teeth, and later on it formed a salient feature in St. Anselm's laborious crusade.

This relaxation belongs, as I have said, to a later period, though the Danish invasions were one of its most prominent causes, and the scourge began in the eighth century. The shadow of Adam's fall must necessarily darken the pages of Church history. The living stones are men, not angels, who would mar God's perfect work if the gates of hell were allowed to prevail.

CHAPTER V.

THE BEGINNINGS OF ENGLAND (800-940).

"EVERY attempt to secure the consolidation of the national and royal power in the State is accompanied by a similar effort for the re-establishment of the Church in strength and purity," [1] says a modern authority on English history in treating of the period following upon Alfred. In reality the movement towards unity by concentration set in with the ninth century, when the division of power maintained by the heptarchy signified the predominance of Wessex. Pending the conquest first of the Dane then of the Norman, England can scarcely be said to have reached more than the shadow of political unity. The line of Alfred had vast capacity and the instincts of royalty, yet neither Athelstan nor Edgar the Peaceful were sovereigns of all England and Wales. The breaking up of the heptarchy in 800-827 merely signified that as Kent, Deira, and Mercia had had their glories, so now Wessex was to have its day of power, and to produce princes greater than their princedom. Other than Saxon hands were to mould the whole mass into one kingdom.

[1] Stubbs, *Constitutional History of England*, vol. i. p. 240.

When in a period of national formation the representative of sovereignty happens to have the kingly soul of Alfred, efforts after political unity will have good results on the Church, but the action of a less royal spirit, who is aiming at concentration of power, will be far from advantageous to spiritual interests. Edward the Elder, Athelstan, Edgar, and Canute did Alfred's work in this respect, whilst the beginning of a hostile State is traceable from the advent of the Norman kings onwards. The Saxons had been in possession for nearly four hundred years, yet they had not made England one. The capacity of men is limited, and the chances are that the individual who is the subject of a petty prince will be a happier and a better man than the cypher of a huge national unity.

In those days, however, men were far from any unity save the spiritual one; the power of the Church was great in proportion as it was grounded on the teaching and inspirations of the one faith. If we could eliminate the democratic elements from the British Constitution, we could trace back to the Church England's most characteristic features.

In the year 800 Ethelard was Archbishop of Canterbury. In his person Pope Leo finally settled the claims of his see to primacy "by the authority of blessed Peter, Prince of the Apostles," and this papal decision was accepted by the Council of Cloveshoe in 803. Its acts have preserved the

hierarchy as it then existed in England.[1] Another council in 805 besought "the Venerable Pope Leo" for the pallium, and at Calcuith, in 816, we may notice this decree relating to the funeral rites of bishops: "Whenever any member of the Episcopate departs from this world, we order, for the rest of his soul, that a tenth part of every man's substance shall be divided and distributed to the poor in almsgiving".[2] As long as the heptarchic kingdoms lasted, the Church, and the Church only, represented anything like general organisation.[3] The wording of the Calcuith decree would seem to show that the custom of the tenth was fully established. It was, in fact, a natural development of the Christian faith, and must have arisen in some shape as soon as the maintenance of the clergy appeared as a practical question. The tenth led on to the tithe, which was perhaps no more than a legal recognition of this obligation. It was made in the eighth century both on the Continent and in England, and frequently mentioned in subsequent legislation. "Besides the tithe, the clergy received, under the name of cyric sceat or church scot, a sort of commutation for first-fruits paid by every householder, and sawl sceat, soul scot or mortuary dues, with other occasional spontaneous offerings."[4]

[1] See Haddan and Stubbs, vol. i. p. 543.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 583.

[3] Stubbs, *Constitutional History*, vol. i. p. 121.

[4] *Ibid.*, vol. i. p. 229.

It is not beside the mark to connect in a certain sense the beginnings of England with the Dane. They did more than prove a few chosen spirits : they helped to make a great nation, though the process was stern and lengthy, the results invisible at the time, and the victims innumerable. As Joseph de Maistre said of the Crusades : "No one of them succeeded, yet they all succeeded". Terror of the Dane produced a line of kings who would have been an honour to any country. The people, who were smarting from those stripes, were far from realising that a future England was being moulded in the rude hands which tore down their homes and sanctuaries, and that the Church was not only to recover from those ruins, but to rise from them with a new life. *Salus ex inimicis nostris* is as true of burning Croyland and its massacred monks as of the *Culturkampf* and United Italy.

Egbert, who had set in motion the stone which was to destroy the heptarchy, died in 837, and was succeeded by Ethelwulf, one of whose first acts was to establish Swithin, his father's friend, in the bishopric of Winchester. The sanctity of Swithin gave him a moral weight in the king's counsels, and his influence was shared by Alstan, Bishop of Sherborne. In a king the wise choice of advisers will cover a multitude of sins, and certainly Ethelwulf supplemented his own lack of wisdom and strength in this way. His early education had prepared him for the Church, and probably for a life of prayer

rather than of action. His piety and generosity made amends for the less kingly side of his character. He gave remarkable proofs of these qualities by going twice to Rome out of devotion to St. Peter's successor, and by offering gifts to the central shrine of Christendom with a truly royal hand. By will he ordered that "every year three hundred mancuses should be sent to Rome: one hundred in honour of St. Peter, especially to purchase oil to fill all the lamps of that apostolic church on Easter Eve, as likewise at cock-crow; one hundred in honour of St. Paul in the same way; and one hundred to the universal Apostolic Pope".[1] Yet he gave something more than his own substance. He sent his little son, Alfred, at four years old to Rome, that he might in a special way receive the blessing of St. Peter. Leo IV. confirmed Alfred, and made him his godson by adoption. Two years later, in 855, Ethelwulf accomplished his second pilgrimage, and, once more, the joy of his heart, little Alfred, was taken to the Pope's feet for more than a passing visit. The royal pilgrims spent quite a year in Rome, which had its influence over the whole of Alfred's career. Ethelwulf's moral training of Alfred ought to outbalance the folly of his second marriage, in his old age, with the French princess Judith. When he died, in 857, he was succeeded, one after another, by his four sons, Ethelbald, Ethelbert, Ethelred, and Alfred. Egbert had been so far from making Eng-

[1] *Life of Alfred the Great*, by the Rev. A. Knight, p. 27.

land one that Mercia and East Anglia were still existing as kingdoms. In 855 King Edmund, who was to fight the Danes with his own special weapons, began to reign over the East Angles.

In the meantime, the inheritance of Ethelwulf, that is, Wessex and Kent, passed peacefully to his elder sons, whilst Ethelred and Alfred bided their time. They had not long to wait. Ethelred became king in 866, and Alfred in 871. In the very year of Ethelred's accession a Danish fleet, shortly followed by the advent of Hinguar and Hubba, Danish chiefs high in command, appeared in the East of England. They imposed upon King Edmund with their apparently peaceful intentions, and profited by their position to study its weak points. No reliance was to be placed on the Dane. Soon afterwards (867), headed by Hinguar and Hubba, they made a descent upon the North, which was easy of access through the dissensions of its princes. Northumbrians were thus the first to bear the Danish yoke. The Danes carried desolation as far as Nottingham, and all the hope of England was in Ethelred and Alfred.

The burning of Croyland, the destruction of Peterborough, the massacre of St. Ethelreda's nuns at Ely, and the heroic resistance offered to the Danes at Coldingham belong to the time when the two royal brothers were girded for the fight. It is, indeed, a matter for regret that the acts of those martyrdoms are not fully recorded. Ingulf has chronicled the fate of Croyland : the massacre of its

abbot as he was singing High Mass, and the one little boy left to tell the tale of horror to the monks as they returned to find their stately cloisters a heap of ruins. At Coldingham, it is said, the nuns disfigured their faces with ghastly wounds in order to avoid dishonour. They were not spared, but burnt together with their convent.

East Anglia was evidently the most exposed region at this time, and Danish fury fell heavily on the person of its young king, Edmund. Some have connected it with the death inflicted by subjects of Edmund on Radnar Lodbrog, a relation of Hinguar and Hubba, but it seems fully accounted for by the barbarity and cruel greed of the Northmen. After burning down Thetford, they proceeded to lay waste all before them. Edmund did them battle near Thetford, where Dane and Saxon were equal. Edmund, however, was powerless to cope with that barbarian host. He would not expose his soldiers to certain death, and he was, moreover, so affected by the eternal loss of the Danes who fell, that he withdrew to Framlingham, resolved to die himself, if necessary, that his people might be spared. Hinguar made him proposals that his conscience could not entertain. He would rather die, he said, than imperil his own soul and the faith of his people. Hinguar was enraged at this reply, and his anger invented a most cruel sentence against Edmund. First he ordered that the king should be cruelly beaten with cudgels, then tied to a tree, and torn a

long time together with whips. During this cruel suffering Edmund never ceased calling on the Holy Name of Jesus. Bound as he was to a tree, the Danes discharged their arrows at him as if his body had been a target. At last there was no sound place in him. The tormentors, not the victim, grew weary. Since their blows produced neither impatience nor death, Hinguar commanded them to strike off his head, and so his martyrdom was consummated on 20th November, 870. Edmund gained his palm at the early age of twenty-eight.

The martyred body was conveyed to Bedricksworth or Kingston, since called St. Edmundsbury. Bury, in Saxon English, meant a court or palace; therefore, St. Edmundsbury signified the king's own town.[1]

Edmund's martyr spirit was as much an element in the beginnings of England as the administrative talent of Alfred and his successors. Men, who measure events by material results, might say that Edmund gave his life in vain, and that his sacrifice did not even profit his subjects. In life he had been unwilling to send the unbelieving Danes into eternity: in death his vengeance was that of the saints, salvation for his persecutors. His blood obtained the souls of the Danes, as the stoning of Stephen raised up Paul. In 1020 the Dane, King Canute, founded a splendid church over the relics of

[1] Butler, vol. ii., 20th Nov.

St. Edmund,[1] whose martyrdom was the work of his race.

The Angles ceased to reign in East Anglia, and the Dane, Guthrum, succeeded the king, who had laid down his life for his people. The Danish domination lasted forty years, till Edward the Elder, the son of King Alfred, reconquered these provinces.[2]

Dark, indeed, was the prospect of things, when, in 871, Alfred, the last of his brothers, succeeded to his father's throne of Wessex—a throne only in name, for at that time hardships constituted the royal birthright. The first years of King Alfred were spent not in reigning but in fighting for the homes and hearths of his subjects. He was ready to die for them, as St. Edmund did, yet more fitted to live for their protection and civilisation. When racked by illness in his youth, Alfred, with the mind of a saint, prayed for a suffering which might be compatible with the discharge of his kingly duties, and his prayer was heard. His pain was changed, not taken away. Up to the end of his comparatively short life he had frequent and severe attacks of illness, which chastened without prostrating him. The wife of his choice was Alswitha, a Mercian princess, whom he married in 868. The battle of Ethandune in 878 made Alfred a king in more than name. It told decisively against the Danes, and

[1] Butler, vol. ii. p. 906.

[2] Alford, *Annales*, t. iii. p. 118.

put Alfred in possession of their redoubtable chief, Guthrum, in whose person the Saxon prince inaugurated the Danish conversion. Alfred's valour won the first fruits of Edmund's blood. The baptism of Guthrum, followed by that of thirty chiefs, and, it is said, of many Danes, was an event in the ecclesiastical annals of England. Even now our national character shows the Danish impress, the mark then left upon it by invasions and subsequent dominion. Alfred stood godfather to Guthrum, but when once he had asserted his kingship and his Christian feeling, he directed all his energy to Wessex, tolerating the possession of Northumbria and East Anglia by the Dane.

The two questions which specially occupied Alfred's mind were education and the practical worship of God, applied first to the affairs of his kingdom and then to the details of everyday life. Much has been said about the ignorance of those times, but it is not generally understood that the knowledge of reading then involved that of Latin. Saxon was the spoken, whilst Latin was the written language, hence those who could not read were not by any means the illiterate people they would be at the present time. On the whole the non-reading of those days contrasts favourably with the idle reading of to-day. The literary stomach of those generations was not spoiled. It was prepared to digest solid food, the good beef and mutton in the book market, whilst it would have turned away with loathing from the sickly, not

to say poisonous, dishes now laid before a reading public. Reading was then much what deciphering manuscripts in an unknown tongue would be now-a-days,—exclusively the occupation of the learned,—so that when King Alfred set the fashion of translating a Latin book into Saxon, he was founding a new world, which was the vulgarisation of ideas by means of popular language. He was deeply conscious of his own deficiencies in book learning, but he made his very ignorance profitable to his people by calling about him scholarly men, who could raise the tone of his court, and look upon the king as their chief scholar. Royal in his spirit, whatever the shortcomings of his mind may have been, he vowed to God one half of his time and one half of his substance, and then devised a way in that uncouth and clockless age of measuring the time which he had given. This he did by burning wax candles of a certain weight. His end, be it observed, was the value of time, not economy. The first view of England as a maritime power also dates from King Alfred. He directed special attention to the fleet, and is said likewise to have conceived something very akin to what we now understand by conscription in ordering his subjects to serve a term as fighting-men and afterwards as husbandmen. These arts and devices are only a development in its larger sense of education, for the moral training of his people was the object the king had in view when late in his life's day he sat down to book learning.

Knowledge without piety is the curse of our days; the fear of God was the beginning of Alfred's wisdom. In proportion as he was eager to make over to God the half of his own time and substance, so was he desirous of helping others to a life of prayer and self-abnegation. The Danes had well-nigh stamped out the religious life in England, and that of Wessex in particular was languishing through this and other causes. Alfred built his first monastery at Athelney, and his second at Shaftesbury of which he made his daughter, Æthelgiva, first abbess. These two houses were always the object of his predilection, and to them a fourth part of his wealth was allotted. The other portions were devoted (1) to the poor of all parts, (2) to his *collegio dei nobili*, (3) to religious houses other than Athelney and Shaftesbury.[1]

Another recipient of Alfred's bounty was the Holy See. This almsgiving was nothing special to Alfred, as it was a common practice and tradition with the Saxon kings, but Alfred's spirit was singularly uninsular. Poverty or learning, whatever the outward garb they wore, ever found a welcome from him. So with the great Christian family, which is spread over the world and independent of latitude and longitude, he was ignorant of rights and privileges attached to Anglo-Saxon nationality, and not shared by others who bore the Catholic name.

[1] Fr. Knight, *Life of King Alfred the Great*, chap. iv.

This was the more remarkable in one whose characteristics were English of the English. The learned men summoned by the king to supply his own deficiencies were four Mercians, who were also churchmen: Bishop Werfrith of Worcester, the Monk Plegmund, Athelstan and Werwulf, priests, Asser, the Welshman, Alfred's earliest biographer, and from the continent, Grimbald, Provost of St. Omer, and John, the Old Saxon.

The laws of Alfred put the seal on his efforts in the cause of education. They are grounded on the Decalogue, and breathe throughout the austerity of the Old Testament. Modern days would say that Alfred had too great a regard for capital punishment. It is certain that he called a spade a spade, and would have been horrified at the proceedings of juries who find a verdict for murder, yet recommend the murderer to mercy. With English instinct, he would not publish his laws till they had received the sanction of his Witan, but when once enacted they were no dead letter. Obedience was stringently enforced, and to bring his subjects within grasp of the law, Alfred availed himself of the Hundred. This was originally an association of a hundred persons for the conservation of peace and law, and of Teutonic institution. In process of time it was applied to territory, much as the tithing itself came to be used as a local division. Many similar institutions, as, for instance, "the tithing, the frankpledge, the guild, and the township, are equally

obscure in origin".[1] William of Malmesbury erroneously ascribes the invention of the Hundred to Alfred, but possibly Alfred was the first to utilise this, as he did other forces, already existing.

After fifteen years of prosperity, Alfred was again brought face to face with the Dane in 893, but the last four years of his reign were years of peace and its noble works. When, in 901, he was called away at the early age of fifty-two, he left a legacy of real power and prestige to his successors. Civilisation had begun to warm the land, and we may trace, as in embryo, some of the institutions which now make our country what it is. The measuring of time, the foundation of England's naval, social and political power, the Christian spirit which pervades our national sense, and has survived even the withering blast of heresy, may be distinctly traced to Alfred. In his day, however, far removed as he was from political unity, the spiritual inheritance was one. Dissentient sects had not raised their Babel of tongues, and it was easier for men to come to the Divine Bridegroom through the strong voice of the Church speaking in the wilderness.

Edward the Elder, Athelstan, and Edgar were all worthy successors of Alfred. The Pope had reprehended Plegmund, the Archbishop of Canterbury, for his remissness in allowing bishoprics to remain vacant. About 909, accordingly, Plegmund proposed in a national council a multiplication of

[1] Stubbs, *Select Charters*, p. 68.

sees. He consecrated three new bishops: (1) for Wells, (2) for Crediton, and (3) for Wilton.[1]

King Athelstan, great in worldly renown, also bore off the palm of a courageous penance. The crime of fratricide is charged against him, and it is true that, in fear of his brother Edwin's claim to the throne, he allowed him to perish out at sea—934. In sorrow and grief at his sin, he accepted a seven-years' penance. Death overtook him before it was completed—940. Athelstan's reign ended a period of comparative prosperity. The real nakedness of the land was revealed in the succeeding reigns, revealed by men who, saints themselves, possessed the best gifts of mind and heart. First and foremost in the ranks was St. Dunstan, but even Dunstan could hardly have coped single-handed with the evils resulting to the Church from the barbarism of the Danes acting on the incipient civilisation of the Saxons.

[1] Lingard, *History of the Anglo-Saxon Church*, vol. i. p. 80.

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CHAPTER VI.

TWO ARCHBISHOPS (940-1066).

St. Odo (942-958) was Dunstan's predecessor as Archbishop of Canterbury in more senses than one. Bishop Ælsfin of Winchester had indeed secured the election for himself by uncanonical means; but, as he was on his way to Rome for the pallium, he perished in the snows of Switzerland. St. Odo, then, prepared the way for Dunstan, both as a royal counsellor, and as a reformer of ecclesiastical morals and discipline. St. Odo's nephew, St. Oswald, became Bishop of Worcester 959, and later Archbishop of York 974, and at Winchester, St. Ethelwold, Dunstan's friend and fellow-monk at Glastonbury, was a zealous co-operator in the work of revival.

Dunstan himself was born in 925 of noble parents, who were living in the neighbourhood of Glastonbury. As a boy he was confided to the abbot. He drank eagerly at the sources of knowledge, and grew up both a mathematician and a musician, according to the capacities of the age. At fifteen or sixteen he was at the court of King Athelstan, soothing the spirit of the royal penitent with the tones of his harp. He did not remain there long, but took the

monastic habit at Glastonbury, where, says William of Malmesbury, "he applied his hand to work, his lips to prayer, his soul to heaven".[1]

Athelstan died at Gloucester in 940, and was succeeded by his brother, Edmund I. How long a time elapsed before Dunstan was again called to court does not transpire; but now he had the additional strength and maturity which are gained from a religious training. Some difference is noticeable between the harp-playing youth, whose music had found the way to Athelstan's heart, and the professed monk, whose motto at Edmund's court seems to have been: "Render to Cæsar those things which are Cæsar's, and to God those things which are God's". The king's special choice of Dunstan was, it must be remembered, the sole ground for the influence which he exercised over the affairs of the nation. Lovers of justice are seldom allowed peace and quiet. Moreover, Dunstan was young and very gifted. He was just the man to arouse susceptibilities, and jealousy soon made his position very difficult. King Edmund forgot his own gracious invitation, and hastily ordered Dunstan to quit the court. Shortly afterwards there was a royal hunt at Cheddar. In the heat of the sport the king pursued the deer over hill and dale, till at length he was led to the brink of a steep declivity, and could no longer rein in his horse. On the point of certain

[1] *Memorials of St. Dunstan*, edited from various MSS., by Professor Stubbs, p. 262.

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death, he bethought himself, as is the wont of men at these critical moments, that he had wronged no man but Dunstan, his friend, whom he had condemned without hearing. He resolved that, if God would save him by Dunstan's merits, he would make good his bad treatment. He had hardly come to this determination when the horse, whose hoofs were already on the edge of the descent, became as tractable as a lamb. The king regained his mastery over the animal, and was delivered from all danger. His gratitude was royal. Without any delay he called for Dunstan and proposed that they should proceed together to Glastonbury. Arrived there, he offered up fervent prayers of thanksgiving, and, pressing Dunstan's hand with great affection, he led him to the vacant abbatial chair, and proclaimed him abbot, promising at the same time to supply all possible needs from his treasury. This royal nomination is referred to the year 946.

Soon after the accession of Edred to the throne in 947, Dunstan seems to have taken up his partial abode at the king's palace, dividing his time between Glastonbury and the court. During the nine years of his reign Edred suffered from the most persistent ill-health. This caused him to look to Dunstan, whom he made his treasurer, for the administration of his kingdom. According to William of Malmesbury, those were palmy days for England. This time Dunstan met with no opposition from the spirit of envy and unrighteousness. He pos-

sessed the king's ear and governed his counsels, and practically worked out the Biblical precept: "Fear God and honour the king". Edred wished very much to see his favourite Dunstan a bishop, but the prime minister was inflexible even to the prayers of the king's mother, who had been charged by him to use her powers of persuasion. "Be assured," said Dunstan, "that I shall never become a bishop during your son's lifetime."[1]

In spite of the familiarity apparent between the king and his chief counsellor, Dunstan was absent at the time of Edred's death. The sickly king was carried off suddenly at last, and Dunstan had his wish not to be burdened with fresh cares whilst his ailing master required all his energy. On his way to the royal deathbed Dunstan received a supernatural intimation that the king "slept in God,"[2] and enjoined on his companions to pray for Edred's soul. He and his monks watched by the royal remains till they were buried with becoming honours at Winchester. The abbot retired to Glastonbury for a short breathing-time. "Yet, although," says his biographer, "he had chosen Mary's part, he did not disdain Martha's solicitude."

With Edred's decease in 956 a new phase begins in the life of Dunstan. Hitherto he had served

[1] *Memorials of St. Dunstan*, edited from various MSS., by Professor Stubbs, p. 279.

[2] "Modo," inquit, "Edredus rex obdormivit in Domino." —*Ibid.*

deserving sovereigns, and had been generally treated by them with grateful appreciation; but now an unworthy successor ascended the throne of Alfred. Edwy or Edwin the Fair, whose short reign began by profligacy and ended in grief (959), brought discord into the kingdom through bad and ambitious women. The scene of his coronation has been often described. The spiritual lords of England, its bishops and abbots, were gathered together for the ceremony, but, as they sat afterwards for the banquet, the king suddenly retired. A certain woman, Elgiva, who was nearly related to him, and her daughter had inspired the lust of the king, and for their company he forsook the great ones of his land. Who would go and call him back to his duty? To do so implied the hatred and revenge of a bad woman in power, which revenge would last as long as the king's passion for her. Dunstan and his kinsman, Bishop Kinsige, offered themselves for the courageous task, but it was Dunstan who used a gentle violence with the king. The crown of England was on the floor—strange emblem of its wretched possessor. Replacing it on the king's head, Dunstan drew him by the arm back to the banqueting-hall; but Elgiva, turning to him with a dreadful look, exclaimed: "Because *you* are impertinent enough to draw the king away from the couch whether he will or no, *I* will take care that you never forget this day nor me as long as I can help it".

The queen's words—for she attained the object of

her ambition—were not vain. Her vengeance pursued Dunstan, and made England an unsafe place for the courageous Abbot of Glastonbury. Dunstan took refuge in Flanders, where the monastic life was flourishing. There, safe from his enemies, he awaited the hour of security.

In the meantime, affairs did not prosper with Edwy. The Mercians revolted against him, and peace was only gained by the division of the kingdom (958), Edwy retaining the country south of the Thames, and his brother Edgar taking the rest of England. Edgar was but sixteen when he became king, and already he showed some decided character by recalling Dunstan, the devoted friend of his family.

After Dunstan's return to England his life shapes itself into two principal aspects—his work as an ecclesiastical reformer, and his labours as a politician, who had before his mind's eye a great principle to which he was always singularly faithful. A monk himself, he founded on the religious life his greatest hopes for the future of the Church. However, he began his public career in his office of prime minister.

More weight was, in the first instance, given to his position by the episcopal consecration which he received on his return from Flanders. According to a custom in force at the time, he was probably consecrated a shire-bishop, pending the vacancy of a see. He became Archbishop of Canterbury in 959.

There is, perhaps, no better test of an apostolic spirit than the fearless correction of those who occupy high places. King Edgar himself seems unfortunately to have been no model in his private life, and once he fell into the sin of seducing a noble maiden at Wilton, who, if not a nun, subsequently took the veil in order to free herself from his importunity. Dunstan, moved to holy anger, went to remonstrate, when, Edgar, putting out his hand, would have led him to the throne. But the archbishop, evading his touch, said, with spirit: "Do you dare to touch the pastor's hand when you did not fear to seize a virgin given to God? You have seduced the spouse of your Creator, and do you think to please the spouse's friend by a bit of flattery?" When Edgar had bewailed his sin, Dunstan imposed a penance with no sparing hand. The king was not to wear his crown for seven years: he was to fast twice a week and to give large alms. In short, he who had robbed God of one virgin was to found a convent which would give Him back many virgins.

If, as we are proud to boast, the English character becomes early apparent in the nature of its free and healthy laws for the good of the lowest British subject, then we must acknowledge that Dunstan was a representative Englishman. Edgar's constitutions bear the impress of a strong and thoroughly English individuality, except, indeed, the institution of the Hundred, which seems to have been an administra-

tive idea inherited from the old German system. Peace, order, and the rights of the subject are the undercurrent of Edgar's secular ordinances concerning the remedial jurisdiction of the king, the regular holding of the popular courts, the general system of security for appearance in the gemotes, and the uniformity of coins and measures. The claims of the individual English citizen are fairly and clearly recognised in these early ordinances: "I will that every man be worthy of folk-right, as well poor as rich, and that righteous dooms be judged to him". And again in the *Supplementum* three points are insisted upon which are of fundamental importance to the prosperity of the State: first and foremost come duties towards God and religion; secondly, the proper balancing of power between the sovereign and his thanes; and, thirdly, the legal freedom of the Danes. The development of these early principles points to the religious mind of the English even amidst the errings of heresy, the independent English monarchy, the free and generous nature of English hospitality towards strangers. Edgar's words, in one instance at least, mark the guidance of Dunstan. He says: "I and the archbishop command that ye anger not God". The ecclesiastical laws enacted may be divided into two classes: the first are called the sixty-seven canons of Edgar, and concern religious observances and the guidance of the clergy. Dunstan's hand is apparent in some of the number. For instance:

"That no priest receive a scholar without the leave of the other by whom he was formerly retained"; "that every priest do teach manual arts with diligence"; "that no learned priest reproach him that is less learned, but mend him if he know how"; "that no noble-born priest despise one of less noble birth, if it be rightly considered that all men are of one origin". The penitential canons form the second class which I mentioned, but they are much less individual. One instrument of Dunstan's ecclesiastical reforms was the restoration of the monastic life. He had also to contend with a low state of morality in secular priests.

The Anglo-Saxon clergy had fallen away not only from their first fervour but from any fervour at all. Certain causes for degeneracy lie on the surface. Civilisation, in its first stage, does not always act favourably upon the moral life of a country, and it may safely be said that the refining process begun by St. Augustine had been interrupted by two and a half centuries of foreign invasion, which had told disastrously on internal growth. The ceaseless incursions of the Danes had had a depressing, not an elevating, effect upon the Saxons; and now, at the latter end of the tenth century, they were little more than half-civilised barbarians, knowing, indeed, those things which they had to do, but possessing not energy enough wherewith to do them. Fear had cast out love instead of the reverse. Thus William of Malmesbury describes the clergy as "given up to

worldly things, addicted to games of chance, equal to, or surpassing, seculars in their love of dress and in their licentiousness, intent upon food even to shameful excess, ignorant of letters as if it were a disgrace to priests to be learned, scarcely knowing the meaning of the words their sacred calling ordered them to say so often". In this state of things any man courageous enough to set up a high ideal of perfection would deserve more gratitude than the founder of a world-wide empire. Yet this is what Dunstan did by the illustration he gave to monastic life, in itself a faithful carrying out of the counsels. He enacted that every see should be filled by a monk or abbot, who should be able to serve as an example to his diocesans, pending the time when the secular clergy awoke to the nature of their sacred vocation. Dunstan would tolerate no compromises, no half-hearted attempts to serve God and the flesh; it was to be a question of living according to the canons or of expulsion from the service of the altar. He also opposed to the utmost the slightest violation of matrimony, justly regarding the purity of Christian marriage as the tie-beam in the frame-work of society.

More than forty abbeys owed either their foundation or their restoration to the action of St. Dunstan as primate.[1] Ely, Peterborough, Thorney, and Malmesbury were restored, whilst the monks formed at Glastonbury, or put forward by Dunstan's exertions,

[1] *Christian Schools and Scholars*, i. 296.

carried the vigour of their Primate into their new dioceses. None seconded Dunstan more devotedly than St. Ethelwold, a monk of Glastonbury, later Abbot of Abingdon, and afterwards Bishop of Winchester. Ethelwold's clergy at Winchester, placed before Dunstan's alternative, had chosen to leave the spot rather than to be reformed. The same course was pursued by Oswald at Worcester, and by Wulfsige at Sherborne.[1] Dunstan put great zeal into the work of visitation, but no monastery attracted him more than Glastonbury. Primate though he was, he became a simple monk within those peaceful walls.

But the good times of Edgar and Dunstan were drawing to a close. The king died in 975, and was succeeded by his son, Edward II. the Martyr. A great reaction heralded in the new reign. By the help of the nobles the expelled clergy sought to recover their footing, and the Archbishop was publicly confronted with his numerous enemies at a council held at Winchester. According to William of Malmesbury, a crucifix spoke thrice to relieve the Archbishop's mind from the anxiety caused by the unruly priests.[2]

The history of England during the last twenty years of the tenth century is disastrous in the extreme. No sovereign appeared with the capacity of Edgar, and the country's energies were sapped by Danish invasions and by an incompetent and worth-

[1] *Memorials of St. Dunstan*, p. 302.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 308.

less ruler at home. Ethelred the Unready deserved his nickname. The shadow of the cruel murder by which he came to the throne hung over his reign, as Dunstan had prophesied that it would. On the day of his coronation the Archbishop is said to have predicted the disasters which subsequently came to pass: "Because you aspired to the throne through your brother's death, whom your ignominious mother stabbed, the sword eager for your blood shall not be taken away from your house all the days of your life. It shall slay some of your kindred until the kingdom shall be transferred to a strange nation whose language and customs are foreign to the people you govern."[1] The peace and glory of Dunstan's legislation were soon forgotten in the weariness of present strife, but his holy life remained as a shining light after the fame of lower things had passed away (988).

The history of England at this ignoble period receives a happy illustration from Archbishops of Canterbury. The Danes, who had been more or less kept at bay under the successors of Alfred, were the constant scourge of Ethelred the Unready's reign. His mother, Elfrida, had committed a dastardly crime in having his half-brother, afterwards called Edward the Martyr, cruelly assassinated in order that her own son might become king. Ethelred was incapable or afraid of opposing the Danes with the sword, so he

[1] Osbern, p. 115.

bought them off with money,[1] thus preparing the way for the Danish conquest of England in 1013. The previous year was marked by the martyrdom of St. Elphege, who, like St. Edmund, laid down his life to save his people from the Dane. We may advert in a few words to a contemporary of St. Elphege, Ælfric the Translator, whom heretics have since claimed for their own as an opposer of Transubstantiation. The works of the greatest minds, the inspired pages of the Gospel itself, are open to misinterpretation. An erroneous construction has been put upon a homily of Ælfric in which he spoke of eating the Body of the Lord by faith. They who have destroyed the sacrifice are for the most part ignorant of what is contained in the Holy Eucharist, *viz.*, at once the commemoration and the reality. Thus, whilst commemorating the Passion of our Lord, we eat His Body by faith. Ælfric's exposition was in harmony with the narrative contained in the sixth chapter of St. John, where the disciples put a carnal sense on a mystery of faith. Ælfric the Translator has been sometimes confused with Ælfric, Archbishop of Canterbury, the immediate predecessor of St. Elphege.[2] In 1006, Elphege was promoted from the See of Winchester to that of Canterbury. He was a man of tried holiness and of mature thought. The laws, known as those of Edward the Confessor, which in reality originated

[1] "Quos cum ferro vincere ignavus homo, aut non posset, aut non auderet."—Alford, *Annales*, vol. iii. p. 407.

[2] Lingard, *Anglo-Saxon Church*, ii. note R.

with Elphege,[1] are a proof of this. The result of Ethelred's weak policy and apology for internal peace was becoming more disastrous year by year. The Danegelt had ignominiously failed. Ethelred had recourse to a wholesale massacre of the Danes in England. In revenge, Sweyn, King of Denmark, after repeatedly bringing desolation to the land, established himself on the throne, and the sceptre slipped from Ethelred's feeble grasp. A Danish dynasty followed till the days of Ethelred's son, the last prince of the Saxon house, who reigned on the throne of his fathers. Ingulf describes Sweyn as being a wholesale destroyer. "He burns forests, disembowels peasants, and puts all good people to death by a variety of torments."[2] He had laid waste a great part of England (*vastata magna parte Angliæ*) when he appeared in 1011 before Canterbury. On the twentieth day of the siege, according to a contemporary historian,[3] a portion of the old city was set fire to, and the conquering hordes poured in to carry out their cruel pleasure. The inhabitants were put to the sword, defenceless women were massacred, their infants torn from their arms to suffer a horrible death. Then it was that the chief pastor offered himself as a victim for his agonising flock. Elphege left the sheltering walls of his cathedral, where the monks were engaged in prayer, and

[1] Alford, *Annales*, t. iii. p. 450.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 456.

[3] Hoveden.

appearing amongst the serried Danish ranks at a spot strewn with the corpses of the slain, he besought them for mercy. "Spare them," he said, "and let your anger vent itself on me." They fell at once upon the gentle Archbishop, and struck him blows which bathed him in his blood. Thus lacerated, they dragged him to witness the ruin of his cathedral. Monks, clergy, and people had taken shelter within its walls, to which the Danes set fire. The fugitives were compelled to come forth, and, as they did so, were massacred before the Archbishop's eyes. His life was prolonged in misery through the avarice of the Danes. They had constituted him their prisoner, and fixed his ransom at 3000 pounds in silver. Elphege refused to raise the money. "An old man's life," he said, "was of little value." He lingered therefore in prison till the following year —1012. On Easter Eve he received the intimation that he must pay the money within eight days or die. His persistent refusal shows that he considered it a question of principle. Weak and worn with ill-treatment, Elphege was carried into the banqueting-room of the Danish chiefs. He was greeted with a fierce shout. "Gold, bishop," they said, "or this very day you shall be made a spectacle to the world."[1] There was a pause before Elphege replied: "I have no other gold or silver to offer you than the knowledge of the true God". They rushed upon him, and soon the body of the Archbishop was buried under a

[1] Flanagan, i. 222.

heap of stones. Yet Thrum, a Dane, whom he had baptised, found him still breathing, and, in order to put an end to his sufferings, clove his skull with a battle-axe.[1] Elphege laid down his life for his flock on April 19, 1012.

In daily life many influences seem more powerful than goodness or even heroic sanctity. The rich and great do their evil will, whilst the unknown saint seems to make no impression on his generation. Yet history reverses the verdict of daily life. The memory of the rich perishes whilst the holy deeds trampled down in ignominy live on. So it was with the martyrdom of blessed Elphege. It did not stay the Dane's hand; but the Danes themselves reaped the harvest of his blood.

On the death of Edmund Ironside, in 1017, Canute, the son of Sweyn, sat at once upon the English and Scandinavian throne; and, during a reign of twenty years, he cultivated the goods of peace, and strove to undo the wrongs which his countrymen had inflicted upon England. Canute went on a pilgrimage to Rome, and promoted justice and the interests of the Church. The sons and successors of Canute were not worthy of him.

At length, in 1042, a reaction against the Danish yoke set in, and the Saxons determined to elect as king the eldest surviving son of Ethelred the Unready. St. Edward the Confessor distinguished himself even amongst saints by his kindness and gentle-

[1] *History of Anglo-Saxon Church*, ii. 295.

ness. No king was ever a tenderer father to his subjects, especially to the poor and the sick. The very Danes respected him. He lived on his patrimony, and never had recourse to taxation, yet he was royal in his alms. Purity of heart and manners is an abiding source of wealth. Far from attempting to found a dynasty, he gave up the delights of married life, and lived with his queen in perfect chastity. The virtue, which has become part of his name, did not, however, come easily to him. In his youth, feeling his weakness, he met it by making a vow of continence to God. The custom of touching lepers for king's evil dates from St. Edward. No practice was too lowly for his kingliness. Indeed, it seemed as if he could never do enough for those who were in sorrow. The only person who received scant consideration was himself. The laws of St. Edward were solemnly ratified by the Conqueror, and are still maintained in the common law of England.

The sword, of which St. Dunstan prophesied, was hanging over St. Edward's kingdom. Bad seasons, famine, and plague followed in the wake of the Danes. Before coming to the throne, Edward had vowed a pilgrimage to the shrine of St. Peter, if God would mercifully put an end to the misfortunes of his family. He was preparing to carry out this pilgrimage, when he listened to the remonstrances of his chief subjects not to leave his people at so critical a time. Pope Leo IX. commuted his vow. The king

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was to give in alms what he would have spent on the journey, and to build or repair a church in honour of St. Peter. St. Edward thus became the second founder of Westminster Abbey, which he endowed with royal magnificence. His body rests in his great abbey church, surrounded by kings, but the majesty of the king of kings has long since departed from St. Edward's pile. St. Edward was the last Saxon king of the old line. In October of the same year, 1066, the Anglo-Saxon period was at an end. The land fell once more under a foreign yoke : the Norman roller passed over England. Saxon vices had got the upper hand, and they threatened to choke all that was noble in the strong Saxon nature. The Norman was to impress his personality on our race. It would not have been all that it has become if its national life had not been engrafted on stocks of various nationality. An "invincible race" is made for the Church.

NOTES ON THE SAXON PERIOD (597-1066).

THE varying fortunes of the Heptarchy serve to throw out the unity of the spiritual kingdom. The history of that unity is in striking contrast to the history of the land during Saxon times. The eight kingdoms, with the fleeting power of the Bretwalda, are one only in their faith, and already that one faith has impressed itself on a divided people.

Spiritual unity was synonymous with the introduction of the Catholic religion, whilst perfect eccle-

siastical discipline gradually unfolds itself year after year until Head and Members are joined together by the close ties we see now existing in the Church between the Pope and the Christian people.

The plan of Pope St. Gregory the Great was to establish a northern and a southern metropolitan, each with twelve suffragans. He conferred great powers on St. Augustine, and in his person on the Archbishop of Canterbury. The successors of St. Gregory the Great invariably confirmed the successors of St. Augustine and every metropolitan. As now, they controlled a nomination which was submitted to them for approval, and expressed it by conferring the pallium. The first five archbishops were Italian monks. On the death of the sixth, Archbishop Deusdedit, King Oswy of Northumbria, and King Egbert of Kent, took counsel together as to the state of the Church (667). Their deliberations resulted in their sending the priest Vighard to Rome that he might receive episcopal consecration, and confer it in his turn throughout England. Vighard reached Rome, but died before he could be consecrated. Pope Vitalian, finally, sent a learned Greek monk, Theodore, in Vighard's place, giving him full jurisdiction over all the Church of the Angles.[1] Until the revival of the metropolitan See of York in 735 under Egbert, the Archbishop of Canterbury was therefore the great connecting link between the Holy See and the Saxon hierarchy. "No establishment

[1] *Historia Ecclesiæ*, lib. iii. cap. xxix.

or alteration of metropolitan sees could take place without the authority of the Pope." Consequently, the original plan of St. Gregory the Great was modified by successive Pontiffs according to the needs of the times. "Agatho limited the number of bishops to one metropolitan and eleven suffragans; St. Leo II. established a second metropolitan at York; Adrian (787) a third at Lichfield; and Leo III. revoked the grant to Lichfield, and confirmed the precedence of Canterbury."[1]

The nomination of bishops all through the Saxon period was, as now, greatly affected by the human element in the Church. It was made either by the choice of the prince, or by the will of clergy and people, or by a combination of both. Thus, the recommendation of the prince weighed considerably with clergy and people; and, as the kings grew more powerful, the danger was that they would impose their choice, and regard an episcopal nomination as their right. From the time of King Canute a change is noticeable in the spirit of the prince, who became more imperious as the boundaries of his kingdom increased. It was the duty of the metropolitan in the name of the Holy See to watch over episcopal elections, and to protest against unsuitable nominations. The question relating to Investiture and Homage, which was brought to a climax in St. Anselm's time, was the outcome of these royal pre-

[1] *Anglo-Saxon Church*, i. 107.

tensions. A stronger monarchy gave expression to claims long seething in the heart of princes.

The first Saxon dioceses were of immense extent, and their government beyond the capacity of one man. Hence there was very good reason for Archbishop Theodore's policy of division. The diocese of Winchester stretched from Kent to Cornwall, and for a long time it represented the only see in Wessex. It was originally founded at Dorchester. Before Bede's death the number of bishops had been increased from seven to fourteen : " Canterbury and Rochester for the kingdom of Kent ; Dunwich and Helmham for that of East Anglia ; Winchester and Sherborne for Wessex ; Lichfield, Worcester, Hereford, and Dorchester (Oxford) for Mercia ; York, Hexham, Lindisfarne, and Witherne for Northumbria ".[1] Sees were occasionally transferred, which accounts for the unfamiliar titles of the original dioceses. According to Bishop Godwin, Salisbury was founded in 705, Bath and Wells in 1059, and Exeter in 905.[2]

Much is said in history about courtier bishops, and perhaps too little of the ideal episcopal life as it was often carried out. The characteristics of the Saxon bishops were manual labour, teaching, almsgiving, and works of charity. They were wont to exercise a handicraft, and to enrich their churches with the fruits of their labours. Copying, bookbinding, illu-

[1] Lingard, i. 79.

[2] *De Præsulibus Angliæ.*

minating, and embroidery were episcopal occupations at a time when correspondence did not enter into the day's business. A daily distribution of alms was expected from bishops. They personally ministered to the poor, and the holier they were, the more they insisted on humble and loving offices, which they made part of their lives. Every day during Lent St. Oswald, Archbishop of York, washed the feet of twelve poor men, and gave them, with all kindness, a silver penny each. Bishops ranked as ealdormen above the king's thanes, and they attended either personally, or through their archdeacon, the chief courts of justice, called shiremotes, which were held twice a year.[1] The separation of the civil from the ecclesiastical courts was the work of William the Conqueror. Secular affairs in those initial times probably required the presence of the bishop, an ealdorman, who commanded whatever learning and education were to be had. Bishops convoked diocesan synods twice a year, and the Archbishop of Canterbury national councils. The Archbishop of York occasionally convened the bishops of his province,[2] but he held a subordinate position until the Conquest. All these councils had much in common with the Witenagemotes. It was Theodore's wish that ecclesiastical assemblies should be held every year at Cloveshoe.[3]

[1] *De Præsulibus Angliæ*, i. 93.

[2] Lingard, ii. 99.

[3] Stubbs, *Constitutional History*, i. 231.

The Saxons had a boundless reverence and love for St. Peter. It may be said that one pilgrimage alone, that of Rome, engrossed their energies. In Saxon times no fewer than eight kings, Cædwalla, Ina, Offa, Cænred, Offa, Siric, Ethelwulf, and Canute, besides crowds of noblemen and prelates,[1] went in person to venerate Peter, both in his tomb and in his chair of authority. St. Peter can scarcely be spoken of as a dead saint; it is certain that he was regarded by the Anglo-Saxons as most living in the person of his successor. We can literally form no conception of what a journey to Rome meant in those days, yet this was willingly undertaken in many cases, only to obtain the blessing of the Sovereign Pontiff. It will be remembered that Alfred, the greatest of the Saxon kings, spent some time in Rome, and was a godson by adoption of St. Peter's successor.

Papal charters to kings, bishops, and abbots were issued as early as the middle of the seventh century, and were prized in proportion to the general love and admiration for the Apostolic See. The ordinary donation to the Church in those times was a grant of land in manse or hide. Landed property was comprised under the terms of "bocland" and "folcland". Bocland was land conveyed by book or charter either in perpetuity or for one or more lives, whereas folcland was national property at the disposal of the king. Every Sunday voluntary

[1] Lingard, i. 105.

offerings were made either in money or in kind. In process of time they became usual, so that whoever went to Sunday mass took his offering as a matter of course. Tithes originated in the same way from informal beginnings. It was only after Alfred's time that they obtained consistency as a national institution. Tithe, whether voluntary or compulsory, was employed only for the maintenance of Divine service and in works of charity. First-fruits, called kirk-shot, were to be paid every Martinmas by the householder. The other church dues were plough-alms, leot-shot, and soul-shot.[1]

The right of sanctuary is older than Saxon times. The Jews had their "cities of refuge," and these cities in Catholic times were churches with certain restrictions, as to time and guilt. Not all criminals could find shelter in sanctuary, and the time was limited to a few days. Certain churches had special privileges. Among these were York, Beverley, Ripon, Ramsey, Westminster, and the abbey of Croyland.[2]

As pagans, the Saxons had practised trials by ordeal. The housel represented their One Sacrifice as opposed to the husles or pagan sacrifices, and they transferred to the true God the judgment they had been wont to refer to Odin. During six centuries these trials were maintained in spite of protest from the Holy See. There were four kinds of

[1] Lingard, ii. 254.

[2] *Ibid.*, ii. 125.

trial by ordeal: by barley bread, by cold water, by hot water, and by hot iron or fire. Popes Stephen V., Alexander II., Celestine III., Innocent III., and Honorius III. condemned these practices, and it was owing to the influence of the Holy See that they were finally abolished in the reign of Henry III.[1]

With the Norman Conquest more complex times began. On the whole the Church has less to fear from small princedoms than from united monarchies. Strong kings tend to oppress her unless they are saints. There was no abundance of strength in the Saxon Heptarchy, and, for two hundred years, the Angles lived in fear of the Danes. Yet it was in Saxon times that our land became the Island of Saints, and Saxon hands built the walls of living stones which made it later on Mary's Dowry.

ARCHBISHOPS OF CANTERBURY FROM ST. AUGUSTINE TO WARHAM (597-1503).

St. Augustine,	Italian monks,	597-605
St. Laurence,		605-619
St. Mellitus,		619-624
St. Justus,		624-630
Honorius,		630-653
Deusdedit (first Saxon Archbishop),		655-664
St. Theodore (Greek monk),		669-690
St. Brithwald,		691-730
Tatwin,		731-734
Nothelm,		734-741
Cuthbert,		741-758

[1] Lingard, ii. 125.

Bregwin,	759-765
Jambercht or Lambert,	766-790
Ethelred or Athelard,	791-804
Wulfrid,	804-829
Theologid,	830-830
Celnoth,	831-872
Ethelred (Athelred),	872-887
Plegmund,	889-923
Athelm,	923-924
Wulfhelm,	924-940
St. Odo,	942-958
St. Dunstan,	959-988
Ethelgar,	989-989
Siricius,	989-995
Alfric,	995-1006
St. Elphege,	1006-1012
Livingus,	1013-1020
Agelnoth (the Good),	1020-1037
Eadsius,	1037-1050
Robert,	1050-1054
Stigand (uncanonical election during Robert's lifetime),	1054-1070 (deposed).
Lanfranc,	1070-1089
St. Anselm,	1093-1109
Ralph,	1114-1122
William Corbel,	1122-1135
Theobald,	1138-1161
St. Thomas Becket,	1162-1170
Richard of Dover,	1173-1184
Baldwin,	1184-1191
Reginald Fitz-Jocelin,	1191-1192
Hubert Walter,	1192-1205
Stephen Langton (cardinal),	1206-1228

Richard Wethershed,	1229-1231
St. Edmund Rich,	1234-1242
Blessed Boniface of Savoy,	1245-1270
Robert Kilwardby (O.P.),	1272-1279
John Peckham (O.S.F.),	1279-1292
Robert Winchelsey,	1294-1313
Walter Reynolds,	1314-1327
Simon Mepham,	1327-1333
John Stratford,	1334-1348
John Ufford,	1348-1349
Thomas Bradwardin,	1349-1349
Simon Islip,	1349-1367
Simon Langham (cardinal),	1367-1368
William Witlesey,	1368-1375
Simon Sudbury,	1375-1381
William Courtney,	1382-1396
Thomas Arundel,	1396-1414
Henry Chicheley,	1414-1443
John Stafford,	1443-1452
John Kemp (cardinal),	1452-1454
Thomas Bourchier (cardinal),	1454-1486
John Morton (cardinal),	1486-1500
Henry Dean,	1501-1503
William Warham,	1503

Compiled from Collier's *Ecclesiastical History*, Palmer's *History of the Church*, and Hergenröther's *Kirchenlexicon* (Artikel, "Canterbury").

SECOND PERIOD.

FROM THE NORMAN CONQUEST TILL THE ACCESSION OF HENRY VIII.

(1066-1509.)

CHAPTER I.

THE NORMAN KINGS AND THE CHURCH (1066-1154).

THE crown, which lay in the dust of Battle as the 14th of October, 1066, drew in, was picked up by no weak hand. Pope Alexander II. encouraged William to set out on the conquest of England, for rumours of Saxon vices had reached his ears.[1] Before all things he wished to preserve intact the inheritance of St. Gregory the Great, his predecessor, and the Norman prince stood before his mind's eye as an embodiment of chivalry, piety, strength, and purity in his private life. The Church had not lived eighteen centuries then and possibly did not appreciate the difficulties of a strong monarchy. It was to be the peculiar experience of the Norman and Plantagenet kings after them; they lusted for the things of God as well as the things of Cæsar. William inaugurated the spirit which Dr. Stubbs has described as "germinating Gallicanism". If he built religious houses, he also aspired to found, and did found, unchristian customs—*consuetudines* as they are called—and if, to a certain extent, he discovered

[1] "Optimates, gulæ et veneri dediti, ecclesiam more Christiano mane non adibant, sed in cubiculo," etc., says a chronicler.

sterling worth in his nominations to ecclesiastical dignities, he claimed, in return, the right of making spiritual vassals. Saxon England had exchanged its former ease for a sharp military discipline. As it quivered, throbbed, and smarted in the Conqueror's powerful grasp, it was no untruthful image of the spiritual kingdom.

As a general rule, the spiritual state of a people will be reflected in its hierarchy. Love of money is often born of persecution; and the decay of discipline had told nowhere more disastrously than in the election of unworthy pastors. The four principal sees, Canterbury, York, London, and Durham, were uncanonically possessed at the end of the Saxon period. Stigand, the Archbishop of Canterbury, was deposed by Papal legates, whom William had summoned to crown him; and, in 1070, Lanfranc, an Italian monk of Bec, was nominated to the chief see. Lanfranc began his pontificate on the Norman lines, and became the king's "man" for the temporalities of the see. Later on the verbal profession of fealty, not the corporal act of homage, could alone be given by a churchman to his sovereign. He could become the king's *fidelis* not his *homo*.[1]

At least thirty-eight of the greater religious houses date back to Saxon times, according to Dugdale.[2] The Norman foundations were also most numerous,

[1] Rule, *Life of St. Anselm.* See vol. i. book iv. chap. ii.

[2] *Monasticon.*

and they have given rise to the general belief that the conquest renovated the spiritual face of the land. Building a monastery is assuredly a work of great piety, yet, when a sovereign has ulterior views about spiritual government and material revenues, the lustre of his act is considerably dimmed. Avarice is laid specially to the charge of the Conqueror by contemporaries, but power and domination were far dearer to him than gold, and he was determined to have them at any cost, many as were his devices for obtaining money. He could, therefore, afford to encourage the Church outwardly, as long as he considered himself its guiding hand and leading spirit. He nominated Normans to the vacant sees, so that, in 1070, only two sees were governed by Saxons, those of Worcester and Rochester. Wulstan, Bishop of Worcester, was the last Saxon saint. It is said that William wished him to be deprived of his see, and that Wulstan, accusing himself of unworthiness, said he would willingly resign his crosier, but only into St. Edward's hands. He fixed it in the stone of the Confessor's tomb, and then it was found impossible to withdraw it. The crosier yielded to Wulstan alone. After this William looked upon him with favour. St. Wulstan died in 1095.[1]

The most important measure with regard to the Church taken by William was the foundation of ecclesiastical courts, in which bishops and archdeacons were to hear causes and to judge them by

[1] Alban Butler, 19th Jan., vol. i.

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canon, not by customary, law. In case of contumacy the offender might be handed over to the secular power. This institution of William's, by strengthening canon law, naturally involved an increase of Papal authority. Priests were to a certain extent outside the law of the land, and could appeal to the Pope as their spiritual head. It is probable that William did not grasp the consequences of his own deed, nor foresee that every religious house, which he founded, would aspire to be under the direct jurisdiction of the Holy See, and value the privilege even more than his royal favour. William was not above what may be called the ordinary jealousy of kings: he wished to rule over souls as well as bodies. His words to a Papal legate, who, about 1076, claimed from him, on the part of Pope St. Gregory VII., Peter pence and fealty, are a proof of this. "Holy Father," ran his message to the Pope, "Hubert, your legate coming to me from you, exhorted me to swear fidelity to you and to your successors, and to consider the payment of the money, which my predecessors were wont to pay to the Roman Church. I admit the one, not the other: I would not swear fidelity, neither will I now, because neither I have promised it, nor can I find that my predecessors promised it to your predecessors."[1] In keeping with these sentiments were the traditions founded by the Conqueror. With a modern ruler,[2]

[1] Stubbs, *Constitutional History*, i. p. 285.

[2] Napoleon I.

he did not care to have the "carcass" of his subjects. He wanted dominion over their souls, and legislated accordingly.

The Norman traditions were called *consuetudines*, and were, as Eadmer says, quite a novelty, entirely out of harmony with Saxon precedents. If on the one hand they attempted to impede the free action of the Church, on the other they made confessors and martyrs. What when England's pastors should refuse confessorship and martyrdom? Then the sovereign of England would have Church and State in his own hand, that is to say, he would become the first minister of a State-mechanism in religion. As a set-off then to his institution of ecclesiastical courts, William laid down (1) that no man in the English king's dominions should acknowledge a duly-appointed Bishop of Rome as Pope except at his bidding, (2) that no one should receive a letter from the Roman Pontiff unless it had first been shown to him, (3) that the primate, when holding a general council of the bishops, should bid and forbid nothing but in pursuance of the royal initiation, (4) that no bishop might prosecute a tenant-in-chief or a servant of the crown for incest, adultery, or other *capitale crimen* without authorisation from the sovereign. These were the blows which a strong hand holding the sceptre aimed at the spiritual power. The experience of the following reign shows what they became when inflicted by a wicked hand. Besides the difficulties opened out by these customs, many

questions raised by the feudal system required to be settled. The king, as its liege lord, called upon all his subjects, secular and ecclesiastical, to become his men. Early, therefore, in the day of feudal power the Holy See determined what should be the attitude of the Church with regard to lay investitures.

William Rufus ascended the throne of England in 1087, and in 1089 Archbishop Lanfranc went to his rest. The Red King lost no time in acting upon the spirit of his father's customs. When the chief see became vacant, it suited his pocket to keep the kingdom without a primate in order that he might dispose of the Canterbury revenues. In the spring of 1093, the fourth year of Canterbury's widowhood, the Red King was enjoying the pleasures of the chase in the west of England. One of his courtiers incidentally mentioned the Abbot of Bec as a man eminently suited to put an end to Canterbury's long mourning. "By the Holy Face of Lucca!" swore the angry king, "neither he nor any other man shall be archbishop of Canterbury but myself."[1] A sudden illness fell upon the rash speaker, and he was borne in all haste to Gloucester. In sickness is truth. William's conscience, oppressed with confiscated Church lands and revenues, would not be quieted till Anselm came to relieve it of its burden, and the Abbot of Bec was consequently summoned to reconcile him to God, as it was believed, before he departed.

[1] Rule, *Life of St. Anselm*, i. 324.

Even at the distance of eight centuries, Anselm's figure comes before us as that of a man we know and love well, with his triple crown of philosopher, champion, and saint. The child's eyes had drunk in the unrivalled mountain valley of his Italian home at Aosta. The monk assimilated all visions of beauty as his days passed tranquilly away by Le Bec's murmuring stream amidst the rough Normans whom the Church was fashioning for herself. The Archbishop spent the accumulated spiritual wealth of his life in fighting for the liberties of the Church.

He belonged to the race of mountain-bred souls who live with the things of God, and give only a cursory glance to those of this world. He had succeeded Lanfranc as Abbot of Bec, and now he was to be Lanfranc's successor as primate. He was chosen archbishop at the king's bedside, as far as the popular voice, expressed under circumstances so solemn, could give vent to a general feeling. The pressure of the hour did not prevent Anselm from measuring the burden which men thus sought to lay upon him. His words were prophetic: "You are for yoking to the plough a poor, weak old ewe by the side of an untamed bull. And what will come of it? Not only untamed but untameable, the savage bull will drag the poor sheep right and left over thorns and briers, and, unless the poor thing disengage itself, will drag it to pieces. Where, then, will be her wool, her milk, her young?" [1] His fingers refused to

[1] Rule, i. p. 334.

grasp the crosier which the nobles of England thrust into his hands. What is the value of a repentance which is only prompted by fear of death, and becomes an empty word as soon as that fear is removed? It is undoubtedly true that the king spoke his real and his better mind in his sickness. Under ordinary circumstances, he did not want a lord and father in God. In his usual health he would have suffered Canterbury to be vacant as long as his crown was not endangered by so doing, and then he would probably have contrived the appointment of a mere tool or creature who would have carried out his greedy—I will not say royal—behests. Anselm viewed the proceedings in the sick room as informal. Nevertheless, king and kingdom had made a spontaneous choice which required only the confirmation of the Holy See to ratify it. In the meantime, William was restored to health of the body, and with it ceased to care for the health of his soul.

In the following August, 1093, Anselm suffered himself to be enthroned in Canterbury Cathedral. He was renouncing peace for the sword. The liberty of the Church has had, and is having, its bloodless martyrs, in the men who have either to establish Catholic traditions, or to maintain them in the face of the powers that be.

The customs of the Conqueror implied rather a love of power than greed of money; but the *consuetudo* nearest to the heart of the Conqueror's son was the traffic of holy things. Gold was his cry, and he

would have it by fair means or by foul. Thus, although he was intolerant of Anselm's spiritual supremacy, and jealous of the Holy See's claims, he was more eager for money than for domination. He would have sold his soul or his lesser pretensions for a good round sum, and he would have done worse. In virtue of *consuetudo* he would have transmitted to his successors on the English throne the custom of traffic in the high places of the Church. In choosing Anselm to be primate he expected some gratification for his royal pains. The Archbishop raised with great difficulty the sum of five hundred marks, which he offered as a free gift to his master. But William's avarice was fostered by an evil counsellor, who whispered into the King's ear: "Dare he offer you five hundred marks? Let him make it a thousand." There was no weakness in Anselm's gentleness. "I entreat you, my Lord, not to decline my present offering," were his words. "Although it is the first it will not be the last gift of your Archbishop. I say it is more for your good and mine to receive small gifts often from me with friendly independence than to extort a great deal from me all at once with a servile condition. In a friendly spirit of independence you may have all I possess for your use; but, with a servile condition, you shall have neither me nor my gifts." As the King persevered in his coarse taunts and threats, Anselm made over his rejected gift to the poor tenants on his estates, thanking God for preserving him from an evil report.

"For, if the King had accepted his gift," he said, "malicious men might have supposed that he was fulfilling a previously-made contract."[1]

It was the custom for a new archbishop, within three months after consecration, to approach the Sovereign Pontiff and ask for the pallium. If he delayed twelve months, he forfeited the archiepiscopate. The particular relations between Church and State made the sovereign's leave a necessary formality; but William absolutely refused to grant it, on the ground that he had not acknowledged Urban II. as Pope. Of what profit, might Anselm have said, is a fettered archbishop who may use neither his eyes to see, his ears to hear, nor his feet to walk? In the spring of 1094, the King was setting out for Normandy. One day, Eadmer says, Anselm went according to his wont to William, to lay before him the grievances which were ruining the spiritual face of the land. "The Christian religion had nearly entirely perished in many men,"[2] and the Primate begged that a general council of bishops might be called. The canons had been laid aside in virtue of Norman *consuetudines*, and no check was put upon crime. "I will attend to this when I think well," was the angry reply, "not when you wish it, but when *I* wish it. What would you say in your council, pray?"

[1] Eadmer, *Historia Novorum in Anglia*, p. 44.

[2] ". . . In [hoco regno tuo Christianitas, quæ jam fere tota in multis periit," etc., p. 48.

Wickedness in its most repulsive form was rife in the land; the example set in high places being followed. "In a short time," Anselm urged, "all the country would be lost to morality." These things did not lie on the mind of the prince,[1] and it was in vain that Anselm urged his third point, the multitude of vacant abbeys, which told disastrously on the life and death of monks, secularising those who had devoted themselves to God. The King could no longer contain his wrath. "What does it matter to you? Are not the abbeys *my* abbeys?" A few more angry words from his sovereign convinced Anselm that he might as well talk to the wind, and, rising up, he departed.

Impossible as it seemed to come to terms, Anselm felt the extreme urgency for England of the king's co-operation with himself. His very first acts as primate had raised a storm. How, then, should he bear the thick of the battle? He besought his episcopal brethren to interpose, but their answer was a new perplexity. The only suggestion they had to make was that the Primate should offer the king a handsome gift in money. They knew and practised no better way of regaining what they were pleased to call his "friendship".[2] This advice was a fearful revelation, and a further proof to Anselm that he would have to fight his battle single-handed.

At the lapse of the twelvemonth which succeeded

[1] *Non sederunt hæc animo principis*, 49.

[2] Rule, ii. p. 30.

his consecration, he was bound to make another attempt with the king in the matter of the pallium. His course lay over a dangerous mountain pass: every step revealed a new difficulty or a vital peril. William now demanded that Anselm should renounce all obedience and subjection to Pope Urban, declaring that the Primate of England could not possibly reconcile devotion to the king with obedience to the Pope, except at the will and pleasure of his sovereign. This was the momentous question which the archbishop laid before the nation at the Council of Rockingham in 1095. The episcopal bench neither "barked nor bit," and the *consilium*, for which in his humility the Primate had asked them, was that of courtiers, not of princes of the Church. They advised entire submission to their lord the king in this as in all future differences. A pause fell on the assembly after they had offered their contemptible advice, and then Anselm spoke these burning words: "Since you, who are called the shepherds of Christ's flock, and the princes of the people, will not give council to me, your chief, save according to the behest of a mortal man, I will resort to the Chief Shepherd and the Prince of all. Know, therefore, all of you, without exception, that in the things which appertain to God I will yield obedience to the Vicar of St. Peter, and in those which by law concern the territorial rank of my lord the king, I will give faithful counsel and help to the utmost of my power."[1]

[1] *Life of St. Anselm*, ii. p. 58.

Had Anselm lent himself to the Red King's demands, and consented, like his episcopal brethren, to buy a fleeting peace, it is easy to see what would have been the consequences. England would have been given over body and soul to a coarse despot, with neither fear of God nor love of man, and its political annihilation would have been consummated. So the instinct of the lords temporal told them, as one of them fell on his knees before the deserted Primate in Rockingham Church, and bade him not to be disquieted, for that the true heart of England was with him.

In the annals of the Norman as well as the Plantagenet kings, fear of the barons often supplied the place of a higher sentiment. If courtier-bishops would consent to any degradation in order to please the king, account had to be taken of those whose liberty was grounded on the free and independent action of the Church. If William agreed to what was in truth a flimsy truce with Anselm, it was because his barons showed uncomfortable signs of being unruly. He was meditating other devices with which to circumvent the archbishop, and to make him yield to bribery. In the spring of 1095, a Papal Legate arrived in England, bearing, at William's secret instigation, Anselm's pallium. As he had received the archbishopric of Canterbury gratis, he would, at least, be willing to pay for this new favour —a truly delicate attention on the king's part. So, at least, argued Anselm's suffragans, as they openly

propounded what the royal bounty expected from him. For a moment Anselm was lost in astonishment, for it might have appeared to him as if even Rome was siding against him. But his line of conduct soon became clear. Not only did he absolutely refuse to buy the king's favour for the much-desired pallium; he maintained, further, that he could not receive this emblem of spiritual office from the royal hands. And once more William was foiled. The cardinal placed the pallium on the high altar of Canterbury Cathedral, and the archbishop took it himself *quasi de manu beati Petri*.[1]

When, in the spring of 1097, William returned victorious from his Welsh campaign, Anselm was watching the moment to bring once again before him the deplorable spiritual state of England. In the autumn of the same year things had come to so bad a pass, and there seemed so little prospect of reformation, that the archbishop announced his definite intention of seeking counsel of the Holy See, with or without the king's permission. The bishops he had found weak reeds, and as time went on they grew in servility and abjectness. Four of them in the king's council-chamber expressed the mind of their brethren. "My lord and father in God," they said to their primate, "we know you to be a religious and holy man; we know that your conversation is in heaven. We, on the other hand, are hampered by kinsmen who depend on us for subsistence, and

[1] Rule, ii. 85.

by a multitude of secular interests which, to say truth, we love. We cannot, therefore, rise to your heights; we cannot afford to despise the world as you do. But if you will deign to come down to our poor level, and go with us along the way which we have chosen, we will advise you as if you were one of ourselves, and, whatever be the business which concerns you, will, if need be, forward it as if it were our own. If, however, you simply choose to hold to your God as if you have hitherto done, you will be alone in the future, as you have been alone in the past, so far at least as we are concerned."

"Betake you, then, to your lord; I will hold to my God," was Anselm's rejoinder.[1]

He could not "hold to his God" without defying a *consuetudo* of the Conqueror, consequently he prepared for his Romeward journey. At their parting interview William did not refuse Anselm's blessing. He, however, sent a rude message commanding the archbishop not to take any of his property out of the kingdom. But this was not all he did. At Dover a royal clerk, William of Veraval, joined the archbishop's party and subjected the primate to the indignity of having his luggage searched for the hidden treasure he might have secreted. On their arrival in France a loose plank was discovered in the ship, and it was no fault of the miscreant who had been tampering with it, bent on evil, if the archbishop was not buried in a watery grave. Anselm,

[1] Rule, ii. 150.

then, arrived at his weary journey's end, and leaving England, in spite of himself, to the men whose "conversation was not in heaven," he laid his wrongs before the great Pope Urban II. They were summed up under four heads: (1) The personal conduct of the king, (2) His confiscation of vacant churches and abbeys, (3) His oppression of the church of Canterbury by giving away its lands to those whom he pleased, (4) His trampling under foot the law of God by the imposition of arbitrary *consuetudines*. These grievances, persisted in without the intervention of an independent power, would have enslaved the Church and debased it into a mere national institution. The close connection between Church and State rendered the co-operation of the king almost necessary for the well-being of the spiritual power; but Rome was coming to an important decision which greatly facilitated the action of ecclesiastical rulers by loosening some of the cords of tight State bondage. In 1099 the Council of the Vatican, by the mouth of Urban II., pronounced anathema on the man who should become the vassal (*homo*) of a layman for ecclesiastical preferment. In those days, as now, crowned heads attached more importance to the vassalship of spiritual than of temporal lords. "They throw me the carcass"[1] has been the indignant though unwarrantable cry of sovereigns since Charlemagne's time, and to bring souls under their sceptre has been their ceaseless

[1] Words of Napoleon I.

aim. The feudal system in particular lent a powerful arm to State encroachments. Homage was of two kinds, simple and liege. All that remained lawful to churchmen after Pope Urban's decision was the former—that is, the doing homage for the temporalities of a see or church preferment. Anselm, therefore, who had refused investiture from the Red King on his consecration, but who had become his "man" in virtue of the existing state of things, would be unable to give a similar homage to William's successor.

The personal conduct of the King was well known to the Pope. "Over and over again has his life been a subject of complaint to the Apostolic See," was Urban's comment. Yet the sword of excommunication was averted by the Primate's intercession. Anselm had no doubt reason to fear the very worst if the most formidable spiritual weapon should be used under actual circumstances. With his courtier suffragans in his mind's eye he may have foreseen the apostasy of the whole kingdom.

Whilst a dire widowhood had fallen on Canterbury in the lifetime of its pastor, and the estates of the see were confiscated and oppressed by the Red King, the persecutor was overtaken by death midway on his course. Forlorn ignominy was the only shroud of the royal corpse, which was found in a pool of blood in the New Forest one August evening during the first year of a new century (1100). Anselm was on his way back from Rome, though not

to Canterbury. The question of investiture had been settled by earth's highest authority, simplifying the dispute for Catholic posterity, but involving much persecution for the time on those who held responsible posts and were engaged in the strife. St. Anselm, then, did but exchange his warfare. If he had fought with one of the most corrupt monarchs of the day, and seen him descend unhonoured and unloved into a premature grave, he was now called upon to contend with different artifices: a polished scholar of fair exterior and genuine convictions, who still had the same pretensions over the spiritual power as his father and brother—such was the successor of William Rufus. If men turn to God when they are in sorrow, so do sovereigns call in the Church to the rescue of their tottering crowns.

By the extraordinary promptitude and energy which Henry Beauclerc displayed on his brother's death, he succeeded in having himself hastily crowned; but there were many turbulent elements which made the presence and support of the Primate necessary, in order to establish him in his regal power. Duke Robert of Normandy, and the evil produced by the feudal system—subjects who were too independent of their liege lord—were formidable enemies. Henry, therefore, wrote an eager letter to Anselm, calling him "dearest father," and beseeching him to return with all speed for the good of his own royal person. If, indeed, the wrongs which Anselm had exposed to the Holy See were most grievous,

they depended on the will of the sovereign, who was master even of the *consuetudines*, though a Norman King did not easily consent to own his predecessors in the wrong. When the Red King died, Anselm might well trust the fair words of his successor, who promised to put an end to the iniquitous traffic in holy things of the preceding reign. It was not so with the question of investiture—that is, of the sovereign conferring the insignia of spiritual dignity. Anselm had returned to Canterbury, when a suspicion entered his heart that his struggle might be only beginning. He had become the Red King's man for the temporalities of the archiepiscopate; but Peter had now spoken, and the act could not be repeated for his successor.

Henry's marriage was part of his successful policy. Matilda Atheling was a daughter of Malcolm, King of Scotland, and of Margaret, a grand-daughter of Edmund Ironside. She had lived from her earliest years at Wilton, where fear of the Normans had induced her to put on the black veil.[1] When Henry's choice fell on this royal maiden, who was seemingly consecrated to God, "the tongues of many were set

[1] This was no idle fear. "Quando ille magnus Willelmus hanc terram primo devicit," are St. Anselm's words, "multi suorum sibi pro tanta victoria applaudentes, omniaque suis voluntatibus atque luxuriis obedire ac subdi debere autumantes, non solum in possessiones victorum, sed et in ipsas matronas ac virgines, ubi facultas eis aspirabat, nefanda libidine cœperunt insanire. Quod nonnullæ prævidentes, et suo pudori metuentes, monasteria virginum petivere, acceptoque velo sese inter ipsas a tanta infamia protexere."—*Historia Novorum*, p. 124.

in motion," to quote the words of Eadmer.[1] Matilda laid her case before Anselm, and it was only when he was thoroughly satisfied that she had never been in reality consecrated to God that he pronounced her free to marry the King. He called a meeting at Lambeth of persons capable of judging the question, and instituted inquiries amongst the nuns at Wilton, who concurred in saying that Matilda had told him the truth. She, who was afterwards known as "good Queen Maud," ever did honour to her early training. She used as queen to show great charity to the poor, and wash their feet. "Who does not know that the feet of the Eternal King are to be preferred to the embraces of a mortal King,"[2] is Matthew Paris' remark on the Queen's humility.

When Anselm's anointed hand had steadied England's crown on Beauclerc's head, and the Primate's authority had appeased the troubled elements, Henry unlocked his secret mind. Two traditions had been handed down to the English sovereign, the one from the Conqueror the other from the Saxon kings. These were homage and investiture. In 1102, at a favourable moment, Henry requested Anselm to become his man, and intimated very clearly to the Holy See that he meant to relinquish none of the Conqueror's *consuetudines*, or of the ancient usages. At a great meeting of bishops and peers in Westminster Hall, Henry

[1] *Historia Novorum*, p. 121.

[2] *Historia Minor*, p. 201.

openly asserted his claims, and, as at Rockingham, Anselm once more stood alone to defend the rights and liberties of the Church. Then, as before, his suffragans played him false, choosing Cæsar rather than God at the price of a lie. Nothing could have been more definite than Pope Urban's words at the Council of the Vatican, but the bishops of York, Norwich, and Chester explained them away by saying that special reservations had been made for their royal master. Emboldened by their abject servility, Henry summoned Anselm to do him homage then and there. As the Primate was inflexible, the king proceeded to invest three bishops-elect with ring and crosier. But remorse overtook them. Roger, elect of Salisbury, died suddenly, sending a message to Anselm from his deathbed. Reinelm, bishop-elect of Hereford, returned his crosier before schismatical consecration, and was deprived of the royal favour; whilst the third, William Giffard, elect of Winchester, refused at the very last moment to suffer the imposition of hands from the Archbishop of York.[1] Another embassy to Rome was proposed by Anselm, and joyfully acquiesced in by Henry. He would thus gain time; but in maturing the plan he came to wish for the Archbishop's departure, and soon he alleged, as a plea that Anselm should go himself to Rome and bend the law of the Church to his *regiæ consuetudines*: "What has the Pope to do with my affairs? What my predecessors had in this realm is

[1] Rule, ii., see chap. vii.

mine," was the feeling which rankled in his breast. And so pressing the Archbishop to come to terms with the Holy See, but wishing in his secret mind to be rid of Anselm at all costs, he succeeded in gaining time, and in imposing a second exile upon the Primate. Whilst Henry was ruthlessly bent on exposing the frail old man to the fatigues of a Rome-ward journey, he meanwhile despatched a special messenger of his own—that same William of Veraval whom William Rufus had employed on a similar errand—and this wily diplomatist was to leave no stone unturned, no means untried, to secure the right of investiture for his royal master.

Pope Urban II. had gone to his rest, and Paschal II. had succeeded him in the Chair of Peter. Once more the King of England's claims were exposed to the Holy Father, and the King of England's envoy, flushed and elated with his own powers of oratory, went so far as to state that "not for the forfeit of his kingdom will my lord the King of the English suffer himself to lose Church investiture". Then Pope Paschal replied: "If, as you say, your king, for the forfeit of his kingdom, will not suffer himself to relinquish Church donations, know this—and I say it before God—that not for the ransom of his life will Pope Paschal ever let him have them".[1] Anselm, before starting, had fully known the mind of the Holy See; and Henry, who was equally acquainted with it, was only concerned to treat it as *non avenu*,

[1] Rule, ii. 312.

to make a show of deference, but to countenance as much underhand dealing as suited his aims. Compromises, episcopal servility and deceit, the interception of letters to and from Rome—these were the means to which he stooped, and which he encouraged. Pope Paschal's words had denounced investiture. "Wipe off the shame of such an aloofment from yourself and from your royalty," was his vigorous expression in a letter to Henry dated November 23, 1103.

After this decision Anselm resumed his way of sorrows, taking up his temporary abode with the Archbishop of Lyons. In his loyalty to Rome and to the king he, pressed down by his seventy years, had accomplished that toilsome journey. He believed he was fighting with want of knowledge when the real obstacle was a moral one and lay in the king's will. The full truth burst upon him when he was requested to become Henry's man, and to adopt all the Norman *consuetudines*, or else to keep out of the kingdom. In urging him to go to Rome, Beauclerc had in fact imposed exile. Nor was Anselm allowed to enjoy the relative peace which would have been produced by absence from archiepiscopal cares. The king seized his revenues, and the Archbishop's tenants were playing fast and loose with such privileges on his lands as had escaped the royal despoiler. Anselm was in the position of an absent Irish landlord, whose moneys are plundered, while he himself can get no rent. Even the Prior of Christchurch

reproached him in stinging words for his absence. But if the close connection between Church and State involved suffering for the spiritual rulers in that age of formation, a sovereign had then to count with Christendom, and where there is a Christendom the threat of excommunication is a reality. The teaching of St. Thomas has embodied the mediæval theory of withdrawing obedience from a prince under sentence of spiritual deprivation. A two-edged sword was suspended over Henry in the spring of 1105. If he persisted in administrating the lands of Canterbury and in claiming the right of investiture, he would draw down upon himself the excommunication of the Archbishop and the Holy See. He would then have to contend with insurrection and unruly barons at home, and the ducal crown of fair Normandy would elude his grasp. There was no time to be lost, and he must choose between two evils. Anselm had once steadied the crown on his head; reconciliation with the Primate, therefore, was a necessary step towards retaining it. The king reasoned in this wise, as, in the summer of 1105, at the Castle of Laigle, he once more encountered the man whom he had so deeply wronged. The sight of Anselm contributed much towards that reconciliation. The monarch was overcome; he fell upon the Primate's true heart and wept. A rumour spread abroad that King and Archbishop were friends, consequently that the strife concerning investiture and royal *consuetudines* was at an end. Henry's renuncia-

tion of both was the price required at his hands in order that he might obtain the peace of the Church.

But one more arrow from the royal bow. The game was so desperate that Henry had been forced to give up the principal points at issue, lest excommunication should overtake him. His subsequent conduct proves that he yielded only to dire necessity, for, instead of bidding Anselm return with all speed to his widowed see, the King, under pretence of settling points with the Pope, temporised, and it was not till the spring of 1106 that Henry formally invited the Primate to come back.

The three bishops who had distinguished themselves as the King's men—the Archbishop of York, the Bishops of Chester and Norwich—as spokesmen of the whole hierarchy, entreated the Archbishop to return, for the days were evil. "*The ways of Sion mourn because the uncircumcised trample them down.*"[1] Just before his departure from England, Anselm had presided at an important council held in Westminster Abbey, 1102. Its articles reflected the times, the conduct of priests in particular, and the abuse which their want of chastity had introduced.[2] Beauclerc, scholarly and refined as he was compared to the Red King, made capital of certain enactments, by imposing a fine on those priests who did not observe

[1] *Historia Novorum*, p. 174.

[2] This is expressed in the VII. Decree: "Ut filii presbyterorum non sint heredes ecclesiarum patrum suorum".—Mansi. *Sacrorum Conciliorum Collectio*, xx. 1151.

chastity. On one occasion, the King, as he came into London, was met by a procession of two hundred priests, barefooted, in their albs and stoles. They fell at his feet to implore his mercy. He turned away from them with scant courtesy, and continued his practices of obtaining money by levying so much on every parish church, since many of the clergy, being faithful to the canons, did not fall under his tax.

It is easier to deal with one man, even when that man is a feudal sovereign, than with a whole body of men. St. Anselm's will had prevailed in the question of Investiture and Homage, and it prevailed as to the personal life of priests, because he bequeathed the struggle to his successors. In his own day, what he saw was immorality and the progeny of immorality, seated in the sanctuary. The extent of the evil may be gathered from Pope Paschal's statement to St. Anselm. It was so common in England, the Pope wrote, that the majority of priests, and of good priests, came under this category.[1]

Conquest itself falling upon a land, already oppressed and decimated, had added its quota of miseries. As to morality, there was not, perhaps, much to choose between Saxon thanes and Norman barons. Anselm found the temporalities of his see in the utmost confusion. King's "men" were in

[1] "De presbyterorum filiis quid in Romana ecclesia constitutum sit, fraternitatem tuam nescire non credimus," etc.—Mansi, xx. 1063.

possession of churches and monasteries, and the whole country was a spoil to a brutal foreign soldiery.[1]

At the general solicitation, Anselm erected a see at Ely, a spot long hallowed by the memories of St. Ethelreda. This step was not taken without due authorisation from the Holy See.[2] His last episcopal act was to defend the rights of Canterbury against Thomas, archbishop-elect of York, who demurred to make the customary profession of homage to the primatial see. In the spring of 1109, the third year after his return from exile, it became evident to the Christchurch monks that Anselm was sinking. "If it were God's will to leave me amongst you only till I could resolve a question about the origin of the soul, I should be glad," said the dying Archbishop; but God was satisfied with other and more important points that he had settled. Stretched on sackcloth and ashes, to meet his last sleep, he died on April 21, 1109.[3]

St. Anselm's victory bore upon it the unmistakable mark of the grain of mustard seed. Who would say that he had conquered on considering what followed his death? His see was left vacant for five years, and its revenues administered by Henry, until the public voice, such as it was in those days, and the Pope's remonstrances, were heeded. Ralph of Rochester was at length nominated—1114. As

[1] Flanagan, *History of the Church in England*, i. p. 294.

[2] *Historia Novorum*, 195.

[3] Eadmer, *De Vita et Conversatione Anselmi*, p. 415.

he was actually translated from Rochester to Canterbury by the King alone, Pope Paschal uttered a protest: "We wonder much," he wrote, "that in your kingdom and under your government, Blessed Peter, and in Blessed Peter, the Lord, should have suffered a loss of honour and dignity. How can any detriment of your own honour, wealth, and power be entailed on you by a due regard of what is due to Blessed Peter in your kingdom?" Nevertheless, the Pope rectified the King's act by confirming Ralph's translation, in the hope that, for the future, Henry would uphold the rights of the Apostolic See.[1]

Henry had been beaten in the matter of Homage and Investiture. He held the more to the Norman *consuetudines*. His father had shown what a strong king made them: his brother what they became with a wicked one: now he himself was giving the measure of the clever king. In virtue of *consuetudo* he had called a meeting at Windsor to elect an archbishop of Canterbury, and not satisfied with this, had exercised the power of translation, which was a right reserved exclusively to the Holy See. He now tried to overrule the affairs of York. In 1114, Turstin, a royal chaplain, was elected to the Metropolitan See of the North, but he revived the old dispute, and claimed exemption from Canterbury, refusing the oath of obedience. The king again took the Pope's work upon himself, and declared that Turstin must waive his claim or resign. This

[1] Mansi, *Sacrorum Conciliorum Collectio*, xx. 1066.

Turstin was quite willing to do, but the clergy of York were dissatisfied with the royal decision. They sent a deputation to the Holy See, and Paschal ruled that the election of Turstin was to hold good. The King, nevertheless, did not receive it, and things went on in this state for four years, till the death of Paschal, in 1118, the see of York sharing the same widowhood as Canterbury after Anselm's death. In 1119, Pope Calixtus was holding a council at Rheims, to which Henry sent his messengers, bidding them say that he would not receive Turstin if it should cost him his crown or seven years' excommunication. The Pope, however, settled the matter by himself consecrating Turstin, who was thus Archbishop of York in spite of the King.

Henry delayed his recognition of Turstin till 1121, when circumstances made him yield an unwilling consent. He was plunged in deep grief at the loss of his only son and heir, which event meant civil war and a disputed succession in the near future. Moreover, Pope Calixtus threatened the Archbishop of Canterbury with suspension and the kingdom with an interdict if Turstin were not recalled within a month. Thus, after a lapse of seven years, he at last took possession of his see. As metropolitan of the Scotch bishops he was brought into conflict with the Scotch King, who was emulating the example of other sovereigns by seeking to adopt "customs" of his own. He, too, would have exercised the right of investiture, and have had a primate

ready to carry out his pleasure, therefore he endeavoured to set up the Bishop of St. Andrews in opposition to the Roman metropolitan. The Pope despatched John of Crema, as his legate, to institute inquiries into claims and discipline. The Scottish hierarchy remained dependent on York till the fifteenth century, and then only the sees of St. Andrews and of Glasgow were made archbishoprics. The new Archbishop of Canterbury, who was elected about this time, 1123, was appointed legate of the Holy See for England and Scotland. Later on, in 1138, Archbishop Theobald, the thirty-seventh successor of St. Augustine, received from Innocent II. the title of *Legatus Natus*, which became an heirloom of the See.[1]

The times of Stephen, the last Norman king, were troubled, and reflected throughout their own insecurity on the Church. He came to the throne in 1135 to the exclusion of the daughter of Henry I., the Empress Maud, being himself a grandson of the Conqueror. The labours of a civil war occupied the country, bishops were distinguished less for their gentleness and meekness than for worldly position and martial tone. Added to the troubles at home there were Scotch risings, yet the few acts recorded of Stephen outside his struggle for crown and sceptre

[1] Godwin, *De Præsulibus Angliæ*, p. 69. It may be well to note that legates are of three kinds—legates *a latere*, emissaries or nuncios, and legates by virtue of their office. From 1138, the Archbishop of Canterbury became *ipso facto legatus natus*. See the Article "Legate" in *Catholic Dictionary*, Addis and Arnold, p. 510.

show that he would have held to the Norman *consuetudines* as firmly as his predecessors in the line. When he gave way it was only because that which he loved most—his kingdom—was at stake.

Stephen's hostility to the Church took the form of persecuting bishops. He threw Roger, Bishop of Salisbury, who was justiciar of England, and the Bishop of Lincoln into dungeons and possessed himself of their estates. Yet the Archbishop of York, Turstin, was the heart and soul of the English defence against the Scots at the Battle of the Standard, 1138. After twenty-six years of vigorous administration Turstin, who had founded eight religious houses in his diocese, the Abbey of Fountains among the number, retired in his last days to the Abbey of Pontefract, there, as a simple monk, to prepare for death.[1] This took place in 1140, and was followed by the election of William, Treasurer of York, who was a nephew of King Stephen. Everything which would have helped another man in the same circumstances seemed to conspire against William. Being one of the royal family, he had powerful influence, but this induced his enemies to say that his nomination had been ordered by the king and was consequently uncanonical. On these grounds, for no personal charge was proved against him, William from the time of his consecration had no more formidable adversary than St. Bernard. A

[1] *Life of St. William, Archbishop of York*, Lives of the English Saints, p. 4.

saint fighting a saint does not often occur in the pages of history. God's design would appear to have been the sanctification of William, who from being in 1141 a generous, open-handed, and popular nobleman-priest, learnt through the vicissitudes of human things the humility and meekness of the Cross. Neither the support of the reigning party, headed by the king's brother, Henry of Winchester, nor the affection of the people of York, availed him anything. Innocent II. had sanctioned his consecration on condition that the Dean of York would swear that the royal mandate had neither superseded nor interfered with the election of the Chapter. The oath was taken by proxies of the dean; nevertheless William's consecration was set aside, and after long delay the new Abbot of Fountains was elected in his place. Cistercian influence, represented by St. Bernard, was paramount at the time, and Yorkshire, with its offshoots of Clairvaux, was brought into close contact with the great Burgundian saint. Owing to St. Bernard's zeal against uncanonical elections the pallium was despatched to William under protest. Through some dilatoriness of his own[1] he had not received it when the Cistercian, and disciple of Bernard, was elected Pope under the title of Eugenius III., 1145.

Whilst Stephen's nephew was thus archbishop without a see, Stephen himself by no means forgot

[1] *Life of St. William, Archbishop of York*, Lives of the English Saints, v. p. 4.

consuetudines. Pope Eugenius summoned a great council at Rheims in 1148, to which Theobald, Archbishop of Canterbury, was determined to go. He applied for the king's consent, which was refused, yet managed with great difficulty and danger to his life to reach the French shore. The Pope received him with joy, but it was a flagrant offence against Norman customs for which King Stephen put him under sentence of banishment. In his turn Eugenius placed the whole kingdom under an interdict.[1] This would seem to have been of short duration, but the necessity for so severe a measure shows that the mind of Stephen was unaltered, and that unlike his royal nephew, William of York, he had not been made wise by adversity. He died in 1154, and in the same year William was acknowledged Archbishop of York, or rather re-elected. Exile and trials of every kind had moulded his spirit into that of a full-grown saint, and so God called him to Himself. He held the pallium and the archiepiscopal office for thirty days. He had not administered a diocese, but he had become a saint in the fiery process of suffering indignity. Neither his royal blood nor the patronage of the great had overruled the possible fear of an uncanonical election, and he thus furnishes a singular proof of the unworldliness which reigned in the counsels of the Holy See at a time when mundane interests reigned supreme at the court of kings.

[1] *Life of St. William, Archbishop of York*, Lives of the English Saints, v. p. 36.

CHAPTER II.

RELIGIOUS LIFE IN ENGLAND.

LITURGY AND DISCIPLINE.

(1066-1200.)

THE Norman Conquest found the Saxons at large effete Christians who were fast relapsing into barbarism. The national vices were gaining the upper hand, and all that was strong and noble in their nature was lost sight of in the passions of the hour. Still the Island of Saints held to its inheritance. The fragrance of St. Gregory's *angeli* lingered in St. Wulstan and St. Edward. The new foreign yoke tried and perfected a race which contributed so large an element to the formation of a great people.

At the time of the Conquest the higher life was represented by two religious bodies, Benedictines and Austin Canons, who throughout remained the most numerous. Excepting the Carthusians, every order or reform originally belonged to one of these two great families. The reforms of Cluny and of Citeaux went out from St. Benedict, whereas the Canons, who followed the Rule of St. Augustine,

were principally divided into (1) Austin Canons, (2) Gilbertine Canons—the one essentially English order—and (3) Premonstratensian Canons, also called White Canons.

The Reform of Cluny was remarkable for its regular and splendid observance of liturgy. In the person of its abbot, Cluny admitted William the Conqueror to a participation of its prayers and good works, and it is said that the King showed more gratitude for this spiritual favour than for the crown of England. William urged Abbot Hugh to send some of his monks to England so that they might reform the Saxon monasteries. The Abbot, however, had heard discouraging reports of the Conqueror's mode of dealing with monks in general, and it was not till 1077 that the first Cluniac house was founded at Lewes in Sussex.[1] The Priories of Lewes and Wenlock in Shropshire were the chief Cluniac monasteries, which became fairly numerous.

The sister reform of Citeaux was more widely spread in England. St. Robert of Molesme was the original founder of the Cistercians, or White Monks, but an Englishman, St. Stephen Harding (1112), and the great St. Bernard (1113), gave that practical impulse to the reform which it required in order to take root. It, too, was founded on a strict observance of St. Benedict's Rule, and made prayer and tilling the ground its special features. Cistercians singled

[1] Rohrbacher, Universalgeschichte der Katholischen Kirche. *In deutscher Bearbeitung* von Dr. A. Franz, v. 15, 40, 97, 98.

out solitary places and transformed wildernesses. The site of their houses is often admired, but it was they, by their labour, who created both site and monastery. The first colony of Cistercians came to England in 1129 and established itself at Waverley in Surrey.[1] Tintern, Netley, and Melrose in their ruins, to mention a few amongst many, show forth the Cistercian plan. Their living stones were no less ordered after a spiritual unity of type.

Yorkshire was particularly rich in Cistercian houses. The second (1132), Fountains Abbey, was originally founded by Archbishop Turstin and a colony of Benedictine monks from St. Mary's Abbey at York, who judged that they were doing the work of the Lord slothfully, and aspired to greater perfection.[2] They chose a solitary spot which they converted into an oasis of peace and fertility. St. Bernard sent them their first abbot, Henry Murdach, who afterwards became archbishop of York (1138).[3] Fountains was a fruitful mother of daughters, but no fewer than twenty-five Cistercian abbeys were founded about this time in Yorkshire and elsewhere. Conventual foundations under Stephen are said to have numbered 115.[4]

The White Canons or Premonstratensians came to

[1] *Notes on English Church History*, Lane, p. 183.

[2] *Memorials of Fountains Abbey*. Surtees Society.

[3] *Life of St. William of York*, Series of English Saints, p. 6.

[4] *Historia Rerum Anglicarum*, W. de Novoburgo. Preface, p. 13.

England soon after their institution by St. Norbert, and founded their first house, which remained the headquarters of the order, at Welbeck Abbey—1153. The University of Oxford, founded, some say, in 886 by King Alfred, did not become famous in Norman times. The University of Paris was the centre which attracted English minds, and thither two great and typical Englishmen, amongst others, went to find their intellectual measure—St. Gilbert of Sempringham and St. Thomas of Canterbury. The life itself of Gilbert is an illustration of the times, by its contact with a state of things peculiar to the Anglo-Norman period. Gilbert was the son of a knight, who occupied the position of squire of Sempringham. Born about 1009, it was not until his return from the University of Paris that he showed the particular bent of his mind, or even the existence of mind at all. He was drawn to teaching, as so many are in our own day, and gathered about him the boys and girls for the express purpose of preserving them in their innocence. His father, Sir Joceline, presented him to two churches on his estate, Sempringham and Tirington, family livings as they might now be called; but at that time the question of patronage had not been determined. Too often church lands became the appendages of certain families. A small pittance was paid to some priest appointed to serve the Church, and the rest the lord kept for himself. A long lawsuit followed Sir Joceline's deed of gift, which rested on his right

of patronage; but in Gilbert's case there was no fear of unworthy possession. He was a lay rector of singular holiness, and lived for a time with one of his parishioners, who was a married man and the father of a daughter. This daughter was the innocent cause of Gilbert's departure. He feared the breath or suspicion of evil, and a forcible dream about the maiden made a strong impression upon him. His reputation found him out in his simple home at Sempringham, and he was summoned by the Bishop of Lincoln to dwell for a time in his episcopal palace. Here he had a more difficult work to accomplish than the instruction of ignorant youth. He had to contend with bishops, who were before all things men of the world, and with a worldly atmosphere in which it is so easy to forget the mortification of the cross. Faithful to our Lord and to himself, he won the veneration and the love of those whom his life put to shame. Bishop Alexander made him his penitentiary, and thus at a time when moral theology was far less defined than it is now, he had to decide the most difficult cases of conscience for the whole large diocese of Lincoln. He need not have stopped at this arduous post, but might have risen to higher places in the Church. Yet about the year 1130 he left the bishop's palace for good, and returned to Sempringham and his early aspirations. His first foundation was that of an order for women. Seven girls, leading lives of prayer and penance, formed the beginning of the

Gilbertine congregation, which was based on the Cistercian rule. The Canons were, so to speak, the second order of St. Gilbert. The marked features of the Gilbertines was the predominance of the feminine element. The Canons were founded for the sake of the nuns, whose spiritual advisers they were to be. The loyalty of his friendship and that of his congregation for St. Thomas is a matter of history. When, in 1164, after the Council of Northampton—another Rockingham—the Archbishop determined to fly from England, he accomplished his journey by the aid of the Gilbertines, who offered him hospitality in the fen country. Gilbert was summoned by the enraged king to London, together with all his priors, to clear himself against the charge of having helped the Archbishop with money. He would not speak the word of denial, which he truly regarded as treason to his friend and archbishop; and, strangely enough, his silence baffled King Henry II. and his justiciars, who sent him back to Sempringham in peace and security.

The Gilbertines were the least numerous of the orders of canons. Their founder lived beyond the allotted years of man, and was over a hundred when he died.[1] Some works are essentially personal and rest upon their founder. This seems to have been the case with Gilbert's order. A certain defect in organisation stood in the way of its future, and no doubt a divine predestination had determined that

[1] *Life of St. Gilbert of Sempringham*, Series of English Saints.

Gilbert was to be stronger and greater than the Gilbertines as a body.

Witham Priory, in Somersetshire, was the first Carthusian house in England, founded in 1175. The Carthusian rule addresses itself necessarily to a very small number, and has always been maintained in its first fervour. The two principal charterhouses were at Sheen, in Surrey, and in London, the celebrated house of the Salutation of our Lady, which has given us a whole band of martyrs. Neither foundation belongs to this period. The whole number of charterhouses in England was nine.

As a further development, so to speak, of the Carthusian rule were the hermit saints. Carthusians are hermits with some of the advantages conferred by community life, but from the earliest times there have been men who felt an inward impulse to even greater solitude than that offered by St. Bruno to his monks. The hermit saints generally received their training in some monastery where they learned the wholesome restraints of obedience. St. Cuthbert had this yearning for silent communion with God, and left Mailros for Farne Island. Prince Athelstan, the brother of King Alfred, better known as St. Neot, was schooled at Glastonbury. In 1193, St. Bartholomew, a monk of Durham, died, a solitary at Farne. St. Godric had preceded him into eternity, 1170.

Alien priories were produced by the Norman conquest. They were cells or convents built by the great Norman abbeys on their lands for the preser-

vation of their rights and the collection of their revenues. The mother-houses of these abbeys were abroad, and the abbeys themselves intimately connected with the Norman baronage. Some of these alien priories paid a yearly tribute to the foreign mother-house; others depended entirely upon the houses abroad, and were, originally at least, not English at all. Alien priories numbered from first to last 100 to 150.[1] They did that which very naturally perhaps our countrymen have always disliked, sent good English gold out of the country.

These various religious houses profited by two kinds of privileges, spiritual from the Pope, and temporal from the Crown. Papal favour often took the form of exemption from episcopal jurisdiction. The houses thus singled out were under the Holy See *nullo medio*, as their charters were proud of expressing it. On the other hand, the king could materially benefit religious orders by grants of land, of tithes, and dues. Individuals could practise poverty whilst the corporate body was thus enriched, but the mere administration of property is apt to engender a worldly spirit. In certain cases outward humility, at least, was wanting to remind the abbot of his religious profession.[2] His greatness consisted rather in the possessions of his house than in himself. However, it must not be forgotten that in

[1] Gasquet, *Henry VIII. and the English Monasteries*, i. 42.

[2] See *Registrum Abbatiæ Johannis Whethamstede Secundæ* for account of Abbot of St. Alban's.

those days the monks answered the purpose of bankers, hotel keepers, and poor law guardians. The *Annals of Dunstable* recount how William the Conqueror had the monasteries searched and the money deposited therein by the rich taken away and added to his treasury.[1] Hospitality was largely and gratuitously exercised towards travellers and strangers, and instead of the present system of workhouse and poor rates, the offspring of Protestantism, which closed the monastery door, a tender and loving charity provided for the needs of the poor, and ennobled honest poverty. Great dignitaries of the Church made daily ministration and almsgiving to the poor part of their life. Every day St. Thomas of Canterbury washed the feet of thirteen poor men and comforted them with food, and St. Wulstan, Bishop of Worcester, the last representative of the Saxon hierarchy, distinguished himself by the same labours of love.

The name of St. Wulstan recalls a bye-gone feature of those times, *viz.*, serfdom. He struck a blow at the slave trade which was carried on at Bristol, and made profitable to the royal coffers of William the Conqueror. The slaves were English peasants and domestic servants, who were misused by their masters and then sold in their hour of need and shame.[2] This was the abuse of the lord's power.

[1] *Annales de Dunstable*, p. 12. Dunstable Priory, Austin Canons, founded in 1135 ; Dugdale.

[2] *Life of St. Wulstan*, Series of English Saints, p. 37.

In ordinary relationship, serfdom bore a close analogy to domestic service as our forefathers used to carry it out. If the serf was the property of his master, the master to a certain extent made the serf his care. Manumission was not unfrequent. It was always necessary in the case of receiving Holy Orders. A point of contention between Henry II. and the Pope was that the king insisted on the ordination depending on the consent of the lord, which the Pope would not tolerate: On the other hand, if a bishop ordained a serf without the consent of that serf's lord, he was bound to pay his price to the lord, and the serf was free afterwards.

Leprosy constituted another feature, of which legislation, both civil and ecclesiastical, had to take account. The devotedness of Father Damien has shown the world what one soul full of divine love can do to mitigate this terrible disease. Leper houses and endowments met the evil when it was as common in England as cancer is now. It was reckoned the privilege of kingship to cure leprosy. Edward the Confessor lovingly exercised this right; but with the Norman kings it seems to have fallen into disuse.

The Crusades produced the military orders of Templars, in 1118, and of Knights of St. John, also called Hospitallers and Knights of Malta.[1] No others obtained a status in England. The Templars were strictly a military order, and when once the

[1] *Kirchenlexicon*, 6 (Artikel "Johanniterorden").

Crusades were over, their work was gone. Their suppression does not belong to this period. The Temple Church preserves what must be always a great memory. The Knights of St. John still exist, though not as they were originally created. To the military and chivalrous spirit they joined the corporal work of tending the sick. Their rule, which was exceedingly austere, was drawn up in 1120. As long as the Crusades lasted, it was common for nobles to make "a vow of crusade". This often led to their pledging or selling their estates to the monasteries, in order to raise money for the expedition. Their wives were frequently left under the care of monastic houses.[1] The Crusades, which put one end before all Christians, tended to produce unity of aim in Christendom, and, in this point of view, were successful.

The suppression of local uses has been a very gradual process. Not so many years ago, for instance, the French clergy relinquished with regret and pain their special breviaries in favour of the one Roman rite. It was a sacrifice to the greater perfection of unity. Mediæval England had rather variety in unity. St. Osmund, Bishop of Salisbury (1078-1099), was the author of the famous *Sarum Customary*, which was largely adopted in England, and prevailed in Ireland. After *Sarum* the York, Hereford, Bangor, and Lincoln Uses were the principal. The Mass was never at any time offered up

[1] *Notes on English Church History*, 182.

except in the Latin tongue. The custom of the "bidding prayer" was universal in England. At the parochial Mass on Sundays, the priest turned to the people after the offertory, and directed their intentions in the following words: "Let us pray God Almighty, Heaven's high King, and St. Mary and all God's saints, that we may God Almighty's will work, the while that we in this transitory life continue; that they uphold and shield against all enemies' temptations, visible and invisible: Our Father, etc.

"Let us pray for our Pope in Rome, and for our king, and for the Archbishop, and for the aldermen; and for all those that to us hold peace and friendship on the four sides towards this holy place: and for all those that for us pray, within the English nation, or without the English nation: Our Father.

"Let us pray for our gossips (God-mothers) and for our God-fathers, and for our gild-fellows and gild-sisters, and all those people's prayer who this holy place with alms seek, with light and with tithe; and for all those whom we ever their alms receiving were during their life and after life: Our Father, etc."[1] The fourth petition was for the dead, when particular souls were wont to be recommended to the charity of the faithful, just as they are to-day.

Two important changes of discipline belong to this period. The practice of infant communion, usually given with the chalice, gradually disappeared after

[1] Father Bridgett, *History of the Holy Eucharist in Great Britain*, vol. ii. p. 56.

the twelfth century, when our present discipline of careful first Communion came into use. In the same way, Communion under one kind was adopted, not all at once, nor at any given time. By the end of the twelfth century this was the general rule. The Church, who is the custodian of the Blessed Sacrament, is also free to determine the mode of its reception, for the essence of the Holy Eucharist, as St. Thomas pointed out, is in the consecration.[1] The chief reasons which led to this change were the danger of desecration by effusion and the fear that if the Sacred Species were never received apart by the faithful at large, men might cease to believe that each contained the whole, our Lord, God and Man. As a matter of fact, Communion under one kind has been practised for the sick from the beginning. Pullen, the first English cardinal, writing in 1130, uses words which show what has always been the mind of the Church: "As the Flesh is not without the Blood, nor the Blood without the Flesh, whoever receives either of them thereby receives the other also".[2] It was not till the Council of Constance, 1414, that the formal decree prohibiting the chalice to the laity was issued.[3]

Matthew Paris tells a story which, be it fact or

[1] Chardon, *Histoire des Sacrements. Sainte Eucharistie. Theologiæ Cursus Completus*, xx. 267.

[2] Bridgett, *History of the Holy Eucharist in Great Britain*, ii. 33.

[3] Chardon, xx. 267.

legend, beautifully illustrates what was a favourite English devotion at all times.

"In the year 1161," he says, "Bartholomew, a religious man well versed in theological studies, was consecrated Bishop of Exeter. Intent on gaining souls, Bishop Bartholomew, accompanied by his clerks, made a visitation of his diocese. It chanced that in a certain country town his bedroom looked into the churchyard. About the middle of the night he awoke to recite the night office, and finding the light was extinguished that usually burnt before him, he chid his chamberlain for his negligence, and bade him go quickly and fetch a light. While waiting for his return the bishop heard voices coming from the churchyard as of a great multitude of children, lamenting: 'Alas! who will now pray for us and give us alms, or will celebrate Masses for us?' He was greatly astonished and wondered what this could signify. Meanwhile his chamberlain, not finding a light in the hall or kitchen, went out into the town, but long sought in vain. At last he saw a light in a house quite at the extremity of the town. He hastened hither and entering it found a corpse, the parish priest, and many people of either sex who were weeping and tearing their hair in their grief. But the chamberlain tarried not; he lighted his lantern, and, hurrying back to the bishop, told him what had detained him and how he had at last succeeded. They sang matins together, and when day broke the bishop sent for the priest and some of the towns-

people, and inquired carefully of them who was the man lately deceased and what sort of life he had led. They all declared that he had been a just and God-fearing man, the father of orphans, and the consoler of the afflicted, and that he had during his life given all his property to the poor and to strangers. Further, he had at his own expense maintained a priest in his house, who every day said prayers and offered Mass for the holy souls. When the bishop heard this, he at once understood that the voices proceeding from the churchyard were the voices of the souls that bewailed the death of him, through whose charity they had been consoled in their pains. Then the bishop summoned the priest who had been used to celebrate Masses for the dead, and gave him a portion in the parish church, enjoining on him to continue the same work of mercy for the rest of his life."[1]

The year 1154 was remarkable for more than the death of the last Norman king. Nicholas Breakspeare, the only Englishman who has ever been Pope, ascended the Chair of St. Peter under the name of Adrian IV., a self-made man if ever there was one. His illegitimate birth necessitated a special dispensation first for the priesthood and afterwards for the highest priesthood on earth. The father of Nicholas Breakspeare was a cleric, not *necessarily* a priest, in the neighbourhood of Bath.[2]

[1] *Historia Minor*, 312.

[2] *Kirchenlexicon* (Artikel "Hadrian IV.").

Neither father nor mother had any means of their own, and Nicholas was consigned to the charity of the great Abbey of St. Alban's. In its cloisters his father returned to the narrow way and did penance. "Here," the recording monk writes, "the father of Adrian IV. became a monk and ended his days in edifying holiness."[1]

[1] *Annales Sti. Albani*, ii. p. 301.

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CHAPTER III.

A CULTURKAMPF (1154-1170).

THE young king, who succeeded Stephen on the throne at the age of twenty, was the first Plantagenet, the bearer of a proud name, but the founder of a dynasty which was hostile to the Church. As grandson of Henry I., and son of the Empress Matilda, Henry II. looked upon the Norman traditions or *consuetudines*, to call them by their technical name, as part of his inheritance. Lord of Aquitaine, in virtue of his marriage with Eleanor, who had ceased to be Queen of France because her scandalous life had induced King Louis to avail himself of a real impediment as to consanguinity to get his marriage with her annulled, Henry was in fact King of some of the fairest French provinces, more powerful therefore than any of his predecessors. Worldly greatness allied to strong passions made him naturally inclined to the original sin of sovereigns, dominion over the spiritual power. This was exemplified in a hand-to-hand struggle, which lends itself to investigation and recognition far better than a crowded battle-field.

Theobald was Archbishop of Canterbury at the

time of Henry's accession. He saw at once the tendencies of the young King, which everything in Henry's position went to foster, and he trembled at the thought of the chancellorship. He singled out the young Archdeacon of Canterbury, who was in deacon's orders, as the man of the situation. Thomas Becket was born in London, on December 21, 1118, and was the son of Gilbert, a London merchant, and Matilda, his wife, who were both of Norman extraction. From the first the mystery of a great predestination hung over Thomas: before becoming archbishop and saint, he was of the material out of which saints are made—magnificent in his thoughts and dealings, pure and chaste in the midst of a splendid court and position. It will be remembered how Archbishop Theobald had insisted on attending the Council of Rheims in 1148, in spite of King Stephen and his *consuetudines*. Thomas Becket had accompanied him on that occasion; for, since 1143, he had been a valued member of the archiepiscopal court, and was receiving the sort of training amongst men of high station which particularly fitted him for his subsequent career. Very early in life he lost his mother, and placed himself under the spiritual care of Robert of Merton, a Canon Regular. Stephen's holding of the crown was a life tenure, on the understanding that it should pass at his death to Henry Plantagenet. He was constantly aiming at the coronation of his son Eustace; but finally circumvented by the "subtle prudence and

cleverness of one Thomas, a cleric of London, whose father was called Gilbert, and mother Matilda".[1] This stroke of successful policy naturally attached Thomas to the person of the young King, and a few months after his accession Henry proclaimed his friend chancellor of the realm. The choice was suggested by Archbishop Theobald and Henry of Blois, Bishop of Winchester, who, one of the royal family as brother to King Stephen, had not lost his spiritual perceptions in his native atmosphere. In 1155, then, in his thirty-seventh year, Thomas became the second personage of the kingdom in civil power. He was, as the chronicle says, "a cleric," and destined by his deacon's orders for the Priesthood. Although Thomas had always had the finer instincts of a noble nature, it was through a conscientious discharge of his duty as chancellor that he arrived at holiness. In the troubled times of King Stephen, foreign adventurers had gained a footing in the land. Thomas speedily expelled them from the country, and destroyed many strong castles which had harboured evil-doers. He applied a remedy also to the great grievance in the Church of long vacancies by nominating at once to sees. He had a natural love of magnificence, and amply satisfied it by keeping up a splendid household and retinue, and by exercising hospitality on a royal scale. Men had good reason to say: "What is the King of England if his chancellor is so great a man?" Worldliness was far from Thomas's mind,

[1] *Life of St. Thomas of Canterbury*, by Father Morris, p. 23.

however prominent it might have seemed in his surroundings. He was the born protector of the oppressed; and, in his new capacity, never turned a deaf ear upon the weak who laboured under injustice. Generosity towards the poor was a marked feature in his character. Before arriving at washing their feet, he fed them at his table after his habitual guests had departed. The germ of charity was there: a fitting opportunity made it burst forth into the flower of heroism. The question of "second subsidies" had weighed heavily on Theobald's mind. They were an illegal tax upon the clergy for the prosecution of the war and one of the Plantagenet "customs". This was a measure which, according to John of Salisbury, the chancellor allowed to pass without sanctioning. Certain doings of Henry's he suffered in silence, knowing full well how much or how little opposition the first Plantagenet would tolerate. Henry could not bear the slightest control in words, but deeds and tact went a long way with the fiery sovereign. Licentious and immoral in his private life, he could still admire the light of chastity in others. He had a great esteem for St. Gilbert of Sempringham, and for St. Hugh of Lincoln, and would even take personal jokes from the fearless bishop. It has been said that St. Hugh would have dealt with him more successfully than St. Thomas, but Hugh was never put into the position of Thomas when, from an old friend, he became primate, and had a still greater Friend than the King of England

to conciliate. It may be that it would have been easier for a total stranger, whom Henry respected, to have fought the battle of the Constitutions of Clarendon. Henry viewed all opposition as a personal matter and as a breach of friendship on Thomas's part, whereas there is just a shadow of a chance that he might have shown fairer dealing towards a churchman pure and simple. From his antecedent career Hugh could never have been in this relationship. No one more than Henry needed a true friend, who would save him from the consequences of his own unbridled passion.

In nominating his chancellor to be archbishop the king might naturally have supposed that he was furthering his own designs with regard to the Church. He wanted an auxiliary at the head of the hierarchy to carry out his behests and acknowledge him as master. In after days Thomas brought forward the manner of his election as uncanonical, but all the required forms were complied with, that is to say, the monks of Christchurch, Canterbury, elected him by vote, the royal choice having been first notified to them. Thomas never deceived himself for one moment as to all that it involved. His words were prophetic: "I am sure I should have to choose between his favour and that of Almighty God, if I myself were to be appointed".[1]

Cardinal Wolsey's dying words might be reversed in St. Thomas's case if constancy in friendship were

[1] *Life*, Fr. Morris, p. 39.

the mark of kings. The chancellor then was consecrated in Canterbury Cathedral on the Octave of Pentecost, June 3, 1162. Thomas thus connected his episcopal career with the mystery of the Holy Trinity to which he had a special devotion. It was he who introduced the feast into England and finally settled that it should be kept on the Octave of Pentecost. The consecrating prelate was that same Henry of Blois who had been instrumental in procuring his chancellorship. He, too, read some of the future. Immediately after the consecration, he addressed these words to Thomas: "Dearest brother, I give you now the choice of two things: beyond a doubt you must lose the favour of the earthly or of the heavenly king".[1] Henry of Blois lived to see the head which he had anointed receive the crown of martyrdom.

The Chancellor, who had kept his purity untarnished in a splendid and most licentious court, now put on the mortification of Jesus after the fashion of the saints. As Archbishop of Canterbury he became *ipso facto* superior of the Christchurch monks; his own life was henceforth that of a religious. He had chosen the "heavenly King," whilst saying in his humility, *de pastore avium factus sum pastor ovium.* The service the earthly sovereign expected from him was that not only of a *fidelis* but of a *homo.* The strife began on the very day when Henry discovered the mind of the Archbishop, and

[1] Morris, p. 71.

his intention to defend the liberties of the Church. In order to ensure his freedom of action, Thomas resigned the office of Chancellor and the Great Seal as soon as he was seated on his archiepiscopal throne. The king was much displeased, and retorted by urging him to give up the archdeaconry of Canterbury. This office, however, Thomas kept for a while in his own hands for special reasons. He proceeded next to reclaim all the estates of his see which had been alienated for one cause or another. The laymen, who happened to be in possession, were thus roused to anger. They whispered their complaint into the king's ear. Thomas was still his friend, and, as such, commanded their moderation. The close of the year 1162 brought with it the end of Henry's favour. The last scene was enacted on his return from France, when he displayed his old fondness and joy in the society of Thomas.

The name of Gilbert Foliot is associated with many of the Archbishop's troubles. Probably he had never forgiven the supposed slight inflicted on himself by St. Thomas's election to the see of Canterbury. At the time, his was the only dissentient voice. In 1163 he was translated from Hereford to London by the united desire of Pope, king, and metropolitan. The Archbishop promised himself great help and support from the nearness of Gilbert, who had a reputation for great holiness and austerity. From the first he was set up by the king as a foil, and in the hour of trial he deserted St. Thomas and

elected the royal camp. There was a flaw somewhere in his spiritual life, which did not, it seems, rest upon the rock of humility. Gilbert Foliot, then, was an ally of the king in the struggle, which was near at hand, and had begun in fact from the day of St. Thomas's consecration. The independent action of the Archbishop usually concerned his right of nomination or the privileges of his church. In virtue of his office he conferred the church of Eynesford upon a cleric named Laurence. William of Eynesford, the lord of the manor, expelled Laurence's people, for which he was excommunicated by St. Thomas. The king immediately wrote to the Archbishop bidding him absolve William. The answer was that it was not for the king to decide who should be absolved, any more than who should be excommunicated. The king was very angry and said: "Now, he no longer has my favour".[1] Another question in point was the election of Clarembald as abbot of St. Augustine's, Canterbury. Clarembald had stipulated that his election should take place not in the cathedral, but in his abbey church, without the customary profession of canonical obedience to the see. St. Thomas would not agree, and the matter was taken to Rome, Henry appearing to favour the abbot-elect.

In other causes the Archbishop plainly showed the gain to the State from an independent churchman. He, and he alone, protested against a tax of two shillings on every hide of land to be paid to the

[1] Morris, p. 3.

sheriffs on condition that they should defend the contributors from the exactions of their subordinates. The king demanded that it should be paid into the royal treasury. None, excepting the Archbishop, ventured to observe that the tax was a voluntary offering, which the sheriffs should receive as long as they did their duty, and not otherwise. Again, the Archbishop had to defend the rights of priests to be judged in ecclesiastical courts, in the few unfortunate instances in which some of their number rendered themselves guilty of crime.

Meanwhile the Council of Westminster, the vestibule of Clarendon, was called at the close of 1163. It was summoned by the king, ostensibly to declare the primatial rights of Canterbury over York; in reality to lay down the royal law on the points at issue between the king and Thomas. Having declared that his thoughts were "thoughts of peace," Henry summoned the Archbishop to deliver up clerics, taken in crime, to the secular arm without the intervention of the Church. The Archbishop consulted his suffragans, but their attitude soon convinced him that he would have to stand alone against the royal demand. It was a question of the liberty of the Church, he said: then, "let the liberty of the Church perish," answered these weak advisers. The firmness of St. Thomas won the point; but the king proceeded to something further, and required a promise that they would observe his royal customs. This the Archbishop granted, with the clause

"saving their order," which of course annulled any bad effects of *consuetudines*. Three bishops went over formally to the king's party—Hilary of Chichester, Roger of York, and Gilbert Foliot of London.

The feelings and convictions of St. Thomas were worked upon by undue persuasion. He was induced to believe that the royal customs, as presented by Henry, contained nothing prejudicial to the Church, and gave his word to observe them "in good faith," and "in the word of truth". This concession has often been construed into an acceptance of the constitutions of Clarendon. No such acceptance was ever given, either in word or in writing; and the mistake of St. Thomas, however bitterly regretted by him, was the fault of a generous man, who allowed himself to be surprised into it. Sordid natures do not make these mistakes. His rejection of Clarendon is the best proof of it. From first to last the articles were an amplification of the Conqueror's *consuetudines*, and little else. They were sixteen in number. They adjudged criminal ecclesiastical causes to secular tribunals, sent ecclesiastical appeals to the king's court in last resort, discussed the ordination of villeins, put the revenues of vacant sees and benefices at the king's disposal, gave him the right of election to churches,[1] cut off England from the rest of Christendom; in short, intruded the King of England into the Pope's place. "By the

[1] Stubbs, *Constitutional History*, i. 464.

Lord Almighty, during my lifetime, seal of mine shall never touch them," was the Archbishop's commentary on these constitutions. Nevertheless, in contrition for the promise he had given to observe the royal customs, he wrote to the Pope for absolution, and abstained during about forty days from saying Mass. It is a curious fact that, although St. Thomas had the sympathies of Henry of Winchester and of others in a lesser degree amongst the hierarchy, no one of them advised or supported him in this matter. On the other hand, his humbler friends spoke their mind on the subject of the concession he had made. His cross-bearer, Alexander Llewellen, ventured to reproach him with "betraying his conscience," and the Archbishop meekly took the correction.[1]

The Council of Clarendon had been called early in 1164. As he had failed to impose its customs on the Archbishop, Henry next tried to circumvent the Pope, by seeking to have the office of legate, that is of *legatus natus*, conferred on the Archbishop of York. His envoys described the life of St. Thomas as precarious, if he continued to irritate the King; and on this understanding Alexander consented to their petition. This step, on the Pope's part, was rendered nugatory by the condition he attached to it, that his letters should not be delivered without the Archbishop's knowledge and permission. Any compact is weakened, when only one of the parties concerned is acting in good faith.

[1] *Life*, p. 139.

The Archbishop sought out the king at Woodstock, but he was forced to retreat without a hearing, and it was then in the anguish of his soul that he first attempted flight. He was however driven back to England by contrary winds, there to endure the ignominy of the Council of Northampton. It was called in October, 1164, under the royal presidency. The Archbishop received his summons to attend not in the customary way, but through the sheriff of Kent. Proceedings were opened by the case of appeal from John Marescal against the Archbishop, who was accused of high treason because he had refused to answer in person Marescal's claim on some land belonging to the see. It was only a pretext. Demand followed demand, and each was of a personal nature. It seemed as if the council had been called for the sole purpose of judging St. Thomas, and of showing him to what lengths the hierarchy would go against him. He was required to account for different sums of money which he had received during his chancellorship from vacant sees and abbeys. The king demanded sureties whilst the bishops advised submission. Henry of Winchester suggested a large offering in money to the king. At this period of his career he seems to have belonged to the class described by Dr. Stubbs as the "professional ecclesiastic". He was neither altogether the world's, nor altogether God's. The temporising bishops were headed by Gilbert Foliot, whose one thought and aim was to please the king.

On the last day of this assembly, misnamed a council, Thomas came in bearing his own episcopal cross, upon which the Archdeacon of Lisieux remarked to Gilbert: "How is it, my lord Bishop of London, that you suffer him to carry the cross himself?" "My good man," was Gilbert's reply, "he was always a fool and always will be."[1] A fool indeed in the eyes of the world is he who lays down his life for the life of the Church.

The Archbishop's sentence at Northampton was committed to the barons, since the commonest feeling of propriety forbade the bishops from judging their Metropolitan. The Earls of Leicester and Cornwall found him sitting in the solitary hall with the faithful Herbert of Bosham, but before they could deliver the king's message Thomas protested against it. A secular tribunal was incompetent to judge an ecclesiastical cause, and this was just one of the condemned Clarendon constitutions. Only one tribunal could judge an Archbishop of Canterbury in last resort, hence Thomas's final words to the Earl of Leicester: "Son and earl, yet listen. By as much as the soul is more worthy than the body, by so much are you bound to obey God and me, rather than your earthly king. Neither law nor reason permit children to judge and condemn their father. Wherefore I decline the judgment of the king and yours, or that of any one else; for, under God, I will be judged by the Pope alone, to whom before you all

[1] Morris, p 168.

I here appeal, placing the church of Canterbury, my order, and my dignity, with all thereto belonging, under God's and his protection. And you, my brethren and fellow-bishops, who have served man rather than God, I summon to the presence of the Pope; and so, guarded by the authority of the Catholic Church and of the Holy See, I go hence."[1]

Some called him perjured and traitor, and he answered that were it not for his sacred orders he would have defended himself with arms. Others insulted him, but outside he found the better mind of England, a crowd of poor, who fell upon their knees as he passed, asking for his blessing. As he went forth from the council-chamber, so soon afterwards did he leave England: alone and pursued by the anger of a king, which is death. It was not that he feared anything that Henry could do to himself personally. He had the interests of the Church and of his flock at heart, and probably, too, he wished to save the king from the terrible consequences of his own wrath.

It was the privilege of the Gilbertines to show him hospitality at Haverolot and Chicksand on his way to Kent, and of their founder to be taken before the king's justiciars for *abetting a traitor*, that is, for helping the Archbishop with money in his need.

There was a contrast between the train of the brilliant chancellor, which caused men to say: "If the Chancellor of England be so splendid, what of

[1] Morris, p. 179.

the king?" and the tried friends, six in number, who followed the Archbishop into exile. The faithful Herbert of Bosham was one of the number. On the same day the king's party, composed of bishops and others, embarked at Sandwich. Their destination was Sens, where Pope Alexander III. then was. The Archbishop found a true friend in King Louis of France, who on reading the phrase *Thomas, the late Archbishop of Canterbury*, remarked: "Truly I am as much a king as the King of England; yet I could not depose the very least of the clerics of my kingdom".[1]

Pope Alexander was proof against Henry's envoys, and would not agree to send legates to England to arbitrate between the king and the Archbishop, neither would he accept the resignation of his see, which Thomas strove to make. The king's choice, so the Archbishop said, had unduly influenced his election, but the Pope and a majority of cardinals rightly considered that his cause was absolutely bound up with the cause of the Church.

After spending three weeks at the papal court Thomas retired to Pontigny, a Cistercian abbey, where in prayer, silence, and spiritual exercises he was to pass two years of his exile. The anger of Henry pursued him beyond the seas. Not only were his revenues confiscated, but all his relations, his household, and even the near relations of his followers were banished, and ordered by a refinement

[1] Morris, p. 202.

of cruelty to go to Pontigny that the Archbishop might witness their misery. Four hundred persons were thus cast forth wanderers from their homes, for the decree had no mercy either on age or sex. In 1166 Thomas left his Cistercian solitude and chose the royal abbey of St. Columba, near Sens, at the friendly solicitation of King Louis. There he remained till he returned to England for his crown.

Henry's departure for France took place soon after the Council of Northampton, and he was chiefly there until 1170, engaged on the conquest of Brittany, and trying not "to counteract the intrigues of Becket,"[1] but to win over King Louis to his own cause. In this he never succeeded, for Louis too justly reprobated his act of tyranny in deposing the first churchman of his kingdom, and in allowing a lay sentence of high treason to be passed upon him. "Henry never again submitted to the advice of a friend,"[2] if indeed he ever had submitted, and when at last he recalled the Archbishop, he did so because both policy and expediency absolutely required it. However little he cared in reality for the Church, he could not afford to have his kingdom laid under an interdict. The coronation of the young king, his son, at Whitsuntide, 1170, by the Archbishop of York, to the prejudice of Canterbury's rights, and the exclusion of his wife, a French princess, from

[1] Stubbs, *Constitutional History*, v. i. p. 468.
[2] *Ibid.*

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the ceremony, were slights which neither the Pope nor the King of France could overlook.

In the preceding spring Thomas had excommunicated Gilbert, Bishop of London, the Bishop of Salisbury, and other nobles and clerics who had taken part against the liberties of the Church, or held Church lands, and now he threatened the kingdom with an interdict. It was time, therefore, for the King to come to terms. No sovereign willingly encountered those spiritual weapons, which placed countries and persons beyond the law of the Church. Henry withdrew all his restrictions, promised to restore Church lands, and no longer to insist on the oath of fidelity to his customs. The kiss of peace alone he refused to give. The royal Louis, who augured ill of the omission, could not prevail on Thomas to delay his return to England until he had received this personal pledge from his master.

Meanwhile, the Archbishop's combat had borne spiritual fruit in the English hierarchy. At the king's instigation they were summoned to London, and required to give their episcopal word that they would obey the king rather than the Pope in matters spiritual. They one and all refused; and Henry of Winchester at their head declared that he was resolved to obey the Apostolic decrees at any cost.[1] The change was due to the confessorship of one man, who returned in December, 1170, to crown it by a martyr's death.

[1] Morris, p. 341.

Louis of France was right. There was no kiss of peace in Henry's attitude. The Archbishop landed at Sandwich on December 1, 1170. He was met by hostility from the retainers of the three excommunicated bishops, as the Archbishop of York had been added to the number in consequence of his part in the young king's coronation. The absolutions conferred on the Bishops of London and Salisbury had been revoked by the Pope's order, and left to the discretion of the Archbishop. As Gilbert Foliot was the king's confessor, his excommunication touched Henry very nearly. The delight of the faithful people of England was unbounded when they saw the Archbishop disembark, and many knelt for his blessing. It was a pure joy for Canterbury, widowed during the lifetime of its pastor; but for the Archbishop there was no pledge of peace, no fulfilment of promises, and the outlook carried conviction to his mind that the words he had heard from our Lord in a vision, "My Church shall be glorified in thy blood, and thou shalt be glorified in Me," were most surely to be accomplished.

Henry's speech—"Who will rid me of that troublesome Archbishop?"—has come down to posterity. If the words are not literal, the purport is. The three bishops, who would not listen to the terms St. Thomas offered them, and were consequently under the ban of excommunication, proceeded to a place near Bayeux, in Normandy, where the king then was. They told him their story with their

own comments. At last, "some one," whose name is not recorded, said to Henry: "My lord, as long as Thomas lives, you will not have good days, nor peaceful kingdom, nor quiet times";[1] to which the bishops added that if the king did not put a stop to the Archbishop's presumption it would grow much worse. Then Henry fell into one of the fits of rage for which he was famous, and repeated: "What slothful wretches I have brought up in my kingdom, who have no more loyalty to their king than to suffer him to be so disgracefully mocked by this low-born cleric".[2] Henry had willingly forfeited the one true friend who might have saved him from himself. Four knights heard the words, and took an oath to please their earthly master even at the risk of their own souls. They were Reginald Fitz-Urse, William de Tracy, Hugh de Moreville, and Richard Brito or de Breton.

It was five o'clock on the afternoon of December 29, when they entered Canterbury Cathedral, and found the Archbishop at his post. "The time for flight was over," he said, and he would not avail himself of the hiding-places at hand about the church.

"Where is the traitor?" shouted one of the armed band, for the knights brought soldiers in their train. The question was repeated. "Where is the Archbishop?" and this time Thomas answered:—

"Here I am; no traitor, but the Archbishop".

[1] Morris, p. 393. [2] *Ibid.*

The murderers approached. To one of them, Fitz-Urse, the Judas of the band, Thomas spoke: "Reginald, Reginald, I have done you many favours: do you come against me in arms?" They tried to take him out of the cathedral, but he resisted, saying: "Do with me *here* what you will".

William de Tracy aimed the first blow, which fell, as did all three murderous strokes, upon his head. The Archbishop, seeing it coming, made his own commendation: "I commend myself to God, to holy Mary, to blessed Denys, and St. Elphege".

Even after the third blow, which prostrated him before the altar of St. Benedict, he was heard to say faintly: "For the Name of Jesus, and the defence of the Church, I am ready to die". De Breton's sword had struck him with so much force as to separate the crown of the head from the skull.

As he lay there, bruised, mangled, and lifeless, before the altar, the sub-deacon, Hugh of Horsea, "placed his foot on the martyr's neck, and with the point of his sword drew the brains from the wound, and scattered them on the pavement".[1] All was consummated.

When the knights and armed men stormed out of the church, people from the town flocked in. At last the church was cleared, and the doors closed. Then the monks with the servants and many of the townspeople surrounded the holy body, which they laid on a bier before the high altar. They one and

[1] Morris, p. 419.

all signed themselves with the martyr's blood, which was still running from the wound. He bore upon him the tokens of his self-inflicted martyrdom, the hair-shirt known only to his confessor, Robert of Merton, who pointed it out to the astonished monks. They kept watch all through the night, and then, as the martyred body was threatened with indignity, they deposited it in the crypt or Lady chapel, which remained securely closed till the following Easter.[1]

The fame of miracles illumined the obscurity which might, through the undying hatred of men, have settled over St. Thomas's resting-place. Wonders became so numerous that it was necessary to throw open the crypt to the public manifestations of devotion, and this at a time when the cathedral was under the ban of desecration. Mass was not said in it for a year after the murder. The shrine was a source of health and grace to the land far and wide, and not to England only, for pilgrims crossed the sea in order to show their love for the martyr. The body of St. Thomas remained in the crypt until its solemn translation in 1220, during the pontificate of Cardinal Stephen Langton. The words wrung from his enemies, when trying to suppress the fame of his holiness and miracles, were true through Catholic times: "All England is gone after him".[2] He was canonised by Pope Alexander III., in 1173, rather more than two years after his death.[3]

[1] Morris, p. 425. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 458. [3] *Ibid.*, p. 467.

CHAPTER IV.

PLANTAGENETS AND BISHOPS (1170-1224).

In presence of the events which immediately followed St. Thomas's martyrdom, the questions naturally arise: "Was not his blood shed in vain? Did his death produce one of the results for which he lived and fought? Was King Henry even contrite for the terrible crime committed by his knights?" St. Thomas's blood fell on a hard and ungrateful soil, yet a martyr's blood is never shed in vain. Flower and fruit came in due season in obedience to that divine law which has immutably attached victory to the Cross.

The king's contrition must be measured by his deeds. When he heard of the crime, he exclaimed: "O that it should have happened! O that it should have happened!"[1] He had not, he said, felt so keenly the loss of his parents. However that may be, he had outraged the feelings of Christendom, and was bound by every sense of propriety to make public satisfaction. The penance he accomplished at the bidding of the papal legates was really edifying, but beyond it there is no trace of abiding sorrow in his

[1] Morris, p. 427.

subsequent conduct. It is shocking to relate that "within the first two years of the murder, the murderers were living at court on familiar terms with the king".[1] He was absolved in 1172, and in July of the same year went to Canterbury in order to do penance on the very spot where others had so grievously sinned at his instigation. At Harbledown he dismounted, and walked the rest of the road to the martyr's shrine. From St. Dunstan's church outside the city he went barefoot, leaving the traces of his bleeding feet as he walked. He spent some time at the tomb in great devotion and much weeping, whilst Bishop Gilbert Foliot told those present of the king's contrition for the horrible deed which had been worked in his name. Then Henry bared his shoulders and received five strokes of the discipline from each of the prelates there assembled and three from each of the monks, who numbered over eighty. He passed the night on the bare ground in prayerful vigil.[2]

Henry acquitted himself well of his temporal penance, but he lacked a firm purpose of amendment. As a condition of his absolution he had sworn that he would no longer hinder appeals to Rome or impede the free action of the Pope; that he would restore the possessions of the church of Canterbury and reinstate all who had been afflicted through St. Thomas; and that he would give up the customs which had been introduced in his own reign. After

[1] Morris, p. 443. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 435.

the murder of St. Thomas, Henry, in his fear of excommunication, caused all the ports to be watched, and it was surmised that the same motive took him to Ireland about that time.

A vacancy of two years and five months followed the martyrdom of St. Thomas, and then Richard, Prior of Dover, was elected to take his place. As difficulties were raised in England against the new archbishop-elect, he was consecrated by the Pope. At the same time, the vacant suffragan sees were filled up, chiefly by men who had not stood by the martyred archbishop. The new Bishops of Winchester, Ely, Norwich, Bath, and Hereford were among the worst enemies of St. Thomas. The two remaining nominations were for Chichester and Lincoln. The Pope took exception to Geoffrey, Bishop-elect of Lincoln, who was never consecrated.[1] Henry had been forced to give up his more extravagant demands, and to withdraw the Constitutions of Clarendon, at least in the letter. Their spirit permeated him and his reign, and was signally apparent in the nomination of St. Thomas's second successor. Baldwin, Bishop of Worcester, 1184, was then translated to Canterbury, certainly not by the free choice of the Christchurch monks, the official electors, but by the devices of Henry.[2] Threats, cajolings, manœuvrings were used in turn, so that a St. Bernard might have condemned the election as un-

[1] Morris, p. 440.

[2] Flanagan, *History of the Church in England*, i. 410.

canonical. Baldwin's pontificate was worthy of its beginnings. He was a courtier bishop, constantly at enmity with the Christchurch monks, and disobedient to the Pope. Persecution of the monks, who appealed to Rome against him, was his distinguishing feature. He embodied the strong animus of the hierarchy at that time against the regulars. He even tried to set up a counter cathedral against the monks at Hackinton about a quarter of a mile to the north of Canterbury, but the attempt was frustrated by the Holy See.[1]

Long before the disastrous pontificate of Baldwin, however, a man came upon the scenes who penetrated into the better nature of Henry II., and shows him in quite a new light. It is one of the anomalies of this sovereign that he appreciated holiness in all instances save one. When his chancellor and bosom friend elected to serve God rather than his king, Henry's affection turned to bitterness and hatred. His admiration for St. Gilbert of Sempringham was unbounded, and his love for Hugh of Lincoln so marked that contemporaries were inclined to allege a more natural reason for his preference.[2] Henry founded the first Carthusian house at Witham in Somersetshire. The want of a guiding spirit threatened to baffle his royal design, when Hugh of Avallon, a monk of the Grande Chartreuse, was mentioned to him as the man likely to meet the

[1] See Flanagan, i. ch. xlii.

[2] It was popularly said that Hugh was Henry's son.

emergency. Hugh arrived at Witham in 1175 out of obedience to his superiors, for it was sorely against his will that he gave up the solitude of his mountain cloister. A strong natural character, which exercises of itself a powerful influence, schooled and nurtured by divine grace, is the most fit to govern men. To this race belonged St. Hugh. His position threw him into contact with three kings, who had the Plantagenet qualities in a striking degree. He was the personal friend and adviser of them all, and rarely, if ever, did he speak to them in vain.

Hugh brought to England the fragrance of St. Bruno, as it had permeated his spiritual man in the stronghold of the order, the Grande Chartreuse. He remained at Witham till 1186, when once more the outer world asserted its claim, and he was called to the episcopal see of Lincoln. It is to the honour of Henry II. that he greatly desired Hugh's exaltation, and used all his weight to bring it about.

It was not long before the new bishop came into conflict with a popular grievance. The passion of the Norman, and of the Plantagenet kings after them, for the chase, necessitated forest laws for the protection of the royal enclosures. King John revived them in all their rigour.[1] In the meantime, they were sufficiently flourishing under Henry II. A contemporary qualifies them as "the tyranny of foresters, a pest which depopulates provinces".[2] No

[1] Lingard, *History of England*, iii. p. 30.

[2] *Vita Sti. Hugonis Lincolniensis*, p. 125.

one short of the king escaped this tyranny. Neither did Hugh; but when it was exercised against the liberties of his see, he excommunicated Geoffrey, the king's chief forester. The bishop was solicited at the same time to bestow a vacant canonry on one of the king's friends, a measure, it was said, which would soften Henry's anger, more than fully roused by Geoffrey's excommunication. "Ecclesiastical benefices should be conferred not on courtiers, but on men of the Church," was Hugh's reply. "The beneficed have to serve the altar, according to the Scriptures, not a palace, nor a treasury, nor a mint. My lord the king is able to reward those who carry out his commands. . . . Well for him if he allow those who are to fight for the king of all to enjoy their requisite stipend, nor suffer them to be deprived of it."[1]

Upon this the royal messengers departed empty-handed, and soon afterwards Henry, who was then at Woodstock, summoned Hugh to his presence. The meeting was studiously planned. Henry was sitting with his courtiers in a semi-circle around him. No one was to rise on the bishop's coming in, nor to give him any salutation whatever, and as for Henry himself he meant Hugh to see and to feel how angry he could be. As the bishop advanced with his usual greeting, he was met by silence, but he made his way in spite of it to the king's side. Henry, in forced unconcern, ordered some one pre-

[1] *Vita.*

sent to bring him a needle and thread, and then began to use them, or to toy with them, on a small bit of cloth, which was hanging round his own royal finger. The bishop watched him in silence for some minutes, and knowing very well what it all meant, made the astonishing remark :—

"How much you are now like your Falaise relations".

This appealed to the king's sense of humour, and, instead of being angry, he broke out into a hearty laugh.

He turned to his courtiers, saying : "Do you understand how this barbarian has insulted us? *I* will explain his words. The mother of my ancestor William, the conqueror of this land, was of low birth, and belonged to the famous Norman city of Falaise. . . . Because this derider saw me sewing up my finger, he taunted me with being like those Falaise people, and related to them."

"Yet, what were you thinking of," he continued to Hugh, "when you excommunicated our chief forester, without consulting us, and made so light of our petition in the matter that you would neither approach us yourself, to explain your conduct, nor send us a civil word by our messengers?"

"The royal wish had helped to make him a bishop," Hugh answered, "therefore it became him all the more not to neglect the duties of his church : he deemed it futile to approach the king in a business which was already judged on its own merits." Henry ac-

cepted every word of this tacit reproval, and his chief forester submitted to the corporal chastisement of the discipline, after which the ecclesiastical censure was removed, and Geoffrey became Hugh's firm friend.[1]

If perfect concord reigned in the cathedral chapter of Lincoln, it was because Hugh had acquired control over a naturally hasty temper.

"Indeed, I am sharper than pepper," he once humbly owned to his canons.[2]

The great devotion of his piety was burying the dead. He would allow even kings to wait whilst he accomplished this work of mercy. His parish priests had orders not to bury the dead when he was at hand. If the dead had led holy lives, they deserved to be honoured; if unholy, then succour was the more needed. Hugh's almsgiving was often spent in procuring for the poor what they would not otherwise have had at their funerals—lights, for instance, and other accessories of external worship. To the rich, too, he gave of his heart's marrow when they were lying in their last helplessness. His biographer mentions his charity towards the body of a certain bishop, which punished both sight and smell. "The sweet odour of Christ made him perfectly insensible to the odour of death."[3]

At that time the Diocese of Lincoln was one of the most important in the English hierarchy, ex-

[1] *Vita*, pp. 129, 130. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 227. [3] *Ibid.*, p. 233.

tending over nine counties.[1] By his position, therefore, the Bishop of Lincoln had an important voice in the episcopal counsels. To this, in Hugh's case, was added the greater weight of personal holiness. Hugh used his influence with Archbishop Baldwin to induce him to give up Hackinton, and to show obedience to the Sovereign Pontiff, but unfortunately other advisers prevailed. In 1190 Baldwin had gone as a pilgrim to the Holy Land, whence he never returned. Hubert, Bishop of Salisbury, succeeded him, and became most useful to Richard I. in the frequent money necessities occasioned by the king's foreign adventures. Hubert's ecclesiastical character was too often lost sight of in the pressure of Cœur de Lion's worldly business.

It was in one of these subsidy questions that Hugh had an encounter with King Richard, somewhat similar to that of the "Falaise relations". A meeting was held at Oxford in 1197 to consider the king's demand of 300 knights from the English barons, amongst whom bishops were reckoned. Archbishop Hubert and the Bishop of London were prepared to do the king's pleasure, but Hugh declined on the score that the church of Lincoln was not pledged to military service abroad, and that he would prefer to retire rather than see its liberties outraged. He carried the Bishop of Salisbury with him, and they both fell under the bann of Richard's displeasure. Confiscation of goods was their penalty, but it was

[1] *Vita*, p. 103.

served only on the Bishop of Salisbury, as no man dared to raise a hand against Hugh. Soon afterwards the Bishop crossed over to France where Richard then was. He found the king at Mass. His greeting met with no response. The Bishop was not to be so daunted, and demanded a kiss of peace, but the king turned his face away. Then Hugh seized hold of the royal person and pressing the *Cœur de Lion*, said: "You owe me a kiss of peace, for I have come a long way to see you".

"You have not deserved an embrace from me."

"Indeed I have," answered Hugh. "Embrace me at once." Then the king relaxed into a smile, and embraced him.

After Mass, Hugh, "who had always sought for God's glory under all circumstances," had a serious talk with the king, and upbraided him with his want of continence and his disregard of the canons in his ecclesiastical nominations. His plain speaking won Richard's regard. "If all bishops were like this one," he said to his courtiers, "no prince or king would dare to defy him."[1] Consistent throughout, Hugh refused to be the bearer of Richard's letters to England asking for subsidies. It was not for him to become their medium of conveyance, nor to be a party to those exactions in the slightest degree. Thereupon the king bade him depart at once.

The same need of money in the royal coffers was at the bottom of a suggestion made to the king with

[1] *Vita*, p. 253.

regard to some rich canons of Lincoln. The plan was to secure the services of twelve in order to get possession of their money. It was indignantly repudiated by Hugh, and again he was sentenced to a confiscation which was never carried out.

In 1198, or early in 1199, the royal demand for subsidies was again under consideration. The reason of these perpetual money difficulties is not hard to find. The royal revenue was in course of formation. As yet the King of England was a large landed proprietor, whose rents were uncertain. Feudal dues, likewise represented by land, were of the same nature. Hugh went to London to consult with the Archbishop of Canterbury, the only result of the conference being that the king required a large sum of money from the clergy, and that the Archbishop was prepared to let him have it.

"Did you not know," said Hubert to Hugh, "that my lord the king thirsts for money as the dropsical man for water?" To this Hugh replied:—

"He may be a dropsical man, but I am not prepared to supply him or other dropsical patients with water".[1]

Hugh never saw Richard again. He was at Fontevrault, on the accession of John, in March, 1199, and seems to have taken a very accurate measure of the new king. John made a show of piety, probably in order to gain Hugh, a conquest he evidently considered worth having. On Easter Day at Mass

[1] *Vita*, p. 274.

the wonted offering of gold pieces was put into John's hand by his chamberlain. He toyed with them at first, and manifested so apparent a disinclination to part from them that Hugh's attention was drawn to him. "What are you looking at?" asked the bishop. "These pieces of gold," answered the king, and "thinking to myself that if I had had them a few days ago, I should not have offered them to you, but have kept them in my own pocket." Hugh was too indignant to touch the royal gold. He ordered the king to throw it into the box and to depart. It was noted that John abstained from Holy Communion. It was believed that he had not received it since reaching years of discretion.[1]

The holy Bishop of Lincoln was to see only the first days of this evil reign. God called him away on 17th November, 1200. He died as he had lived, in Carthusian austerity, and he who had so often forgotten all temporal concerns to bury the dead was honoured by a splendid funeral in Lincoln Cathedral. The Kings of Scotland and England were present at it, and John even helped to carry the holy corpse, for which gracious deed alone it might be said all was not bad in him.

It was not till 1205 that he came into open conflict with the Holy See on one of the usual points of dissension,—the nomination of an archbishop of Canterbury. Archbishop Hubert died in 1205. He had made himself so useful to Richard I. in the matter

[1] *Vita*, p. 293.

of the king's ransom, and enjoyed consequently so much favour that it was said there was no more powerful man in the kingdom.[1] Upon his death, the Christchurch monks proceeded hurriedly and by night to the election of their sub-prior, Reginald. They despatched him in all haste to Rome, where his nomination was not ratified. On the other hand, the king had his candidate, John de Gray, bishop of Norwich. The Pope passed over both, and nominated Cardinal Stephen Langton to be Archbishop of Canterbury. He did more: he consecrated Stephen with his own hands in June, 1207. As may be surmised, Langton had made his mark. He had attained great distinction as a professor at the University of Paris, and won all that he held by his own exertions, since he was not favoured with the outward goods of birth and fortune to any extraordinary degree. He became a prebendary of York, afterwards of Notre Dame in Paris, and in 1206 was promoted by Innocent III. to be Cardinal Priest of St. Chrysogonus. In nominating and consecrating Stephen Langton against Reginald, the monk's candidate, and John de Gray, the king's candidate, Innocent wished to break the precedent of royal elections, and to exercise a prerogative of the Holy See with which the Church could ill dispense when the supreme power was vested in ignoble hands. "The Apostolic See," he told the king, "might justly envy England the possession of a man mighty

[1] Godwin, *De Præsulibus Angliæ*, p. 84.

in word and deed before God and before man, eminent both for his learning and his life," and he besought John "for God's honour and by the intercession of St. Thomas, to spare the liberty of a church which had endured so many troubles, and to accord his favour to the new Primate".[1]

The liberties of the Church were a dead letter to King John, and although he had nothing personal against Langton, he preferred an obstinate resistance to even a show of submission. The acceptance or rejection of Langton was a trial of strength between King and Pontiff. If John persisted in his refusal Innocent threatened the kingdom with an interdict, and as long as it was restricted to a spiritual penalty, John laughed it to scorn. Ready money, not the higher blessings of the sacramental life, was what he wanted, and if the interdict opened a source of profit to his empty treasury, it was heartily welcome.

In obedience to the Pope's orders, the Bishops of London, Ely, and Worcester[2] besought the king towards the close of 1207 to receive the new Primate, and to allow the Canterbury monks, who had been banished, to return. Their appeal was met by a burst of Plantagenet fury. "Only dare to publish an interdict," shouted John, "and I will make over every bishop and priest to the Pope, and take their goods and chattels for myself."[3]

[1] *Life of Stephen Langton*, Lives of English Saints Series, p. 24.

[2] Hurter says, *Winchester*, *Innocenz der Dritte*, ii. p. 131. [3] *Ibid.*

The three Bishops published the interdict in the spring of 1208. It included Ireland and Wales and meant a suppression of sacramental life for the two kingdoms. Only infants and the dying could be provided with spiritual food; even the dead were buried without religious rites. Sermons were preached on Sundays in the churchyard: marriages and churchings took place in the porch of the church.[1] No religious order was exempted from its rigour, although in ordinary interdicts some had special privileges. The Cistercians, for instance, acted at first upon theirs, but were obliged to conform and to accept the bleak desolation involved by the total suppression of liturgy and sacraments. On the petition of Archbishop Langton, however, the Pope later on allowed the weekly celebration of Mass, with closed doors, in religious houses. From this indulgence the Cistercians were specially excluded for having disobeyed the interdict. When they conformed to the interdict, they felt the full weight of the king's displeasure. His mode of retaliation was to keep the church lands in his own hands, as he had threatened the three bishops that he would. With religious bodies he adopted the more convenient plan of a tax or money fine. The Cistercians in particular irritated him by their goodness and their prosperity. He taxed them accordingly to the amount of £33,300,[2] and dispersed their communities.

[1] Lingard, *History of England*, iii. p. 21.

[2] *Chronica Monasterii de Melsa*, 346, and Lingard, iii. 30.

No sooner was the sentence published than John issued orders through his sheriffs, condemning every priest, whether regular or secular, who should observe the interdict, to leave the kingdom. In spite of this severity, only three bishops and a few courtier priests defied the Pope, and sided with the king. Church lands were awarded to needy foreign adventurers, courtiers, and harpies of all kinds. Henry I. had traded on a neglect of the canons, or rather of one canon, in the clergy. King John did the same by throwing into prison one unhappy class among his subjects,[1] in the distinct hope of being paid for their ransom.

The interdict punished the country rather than the sinner. Two kingdoms were doing penance for John's obstinacy: his people were famishing with every evil example before their eyes. He, who was thus callous to the sufferings of others, might defy the interdict, but it was otherwise with the sentence of personal excommunication, which followed in its train. In the days of Christendom an excommunicated person was morally what a leper was physically, an object of abhorrence and disgust, whom charity itself could not reach except by prayer, since intercourse was prohibited. The subjects of an excommunicated prince were no longer bound to their allegiance. In January, 1213, Cardinal Langton published this solemn sentence against King John in the presence of the King of

[1] *Focarice.*

France, the French clergy and people. Innocent III. charged Philip Augustus to assist in dethroning a king who had forfeited the confidence of Christendom.[1]

John was now fairly roused. Attrition did the work of contrition; the fear of losing his crown produced in a few weeks results which years of interdict had failed to bring forth. And though he was without faith, he had its parasite. He was superstitious, and the utterances of a hermit, who predicted that he should cease to be king before Ascension Day, 1213, made a deep impression on his mind. On 15th May John resigned his kingdom into the hands of the Papal legate, Pandulph, representing Pope Innocent, and received a deed in return, by which he was to hold it as a vassal of the Holy See. John bound himself to pay one thousand marks in fee to the Roman Church; he recognised Langton as Archbishop of Canterbury; restored the lands and offices of all exiles, whether clergy or laity, and promised full restitution of all the monies unlawfully seized.[2]

On these conditions he was solemnly absolved from excommunication, and threw himself at Langton's feet in tears of apparently genuine contrition. The interdict was removed in 1214, after it had lasted six weary years.

Nicholas, the second legate sent by Innocent to England, caused some umbrage to Langton before

[1] Hurter, ii. 510. [2] Lingard, iii. 31.

he left England. It must be remembered that the Archbishop of Canterbury was a *legatus natus*, and that the claims of a *legatus a latere* might easily clash with his privileges. This seems to have happened with the legate Nicholas, who certainly trusted the king overmuch, and misrepresented Langton in consequence.[1] Langton had come into closer contact with King John than the Pope, and it may be that in testing the vileness of the monarch he somewhat forgot the principle of monarchy.

Stephen Langton had hardly taken possession of his see before the barons began to show signs of insubordination. The confusion and desolation of the interdict had produced a corresponding anarchy in the State. When the restraining arm of the Church was relaxed, the tyranny of John had made itself more sorely felt. There was now a reaction throughout the land in the direction of liberty. The Charta was to do for the civil constitution what the election of Langton had done for the spiritual. The one had been a protest against royal nominations arbitrarily made: the other was to represent the basis on which the British subject founds his individual independence. If the barons had applied in the first instance to the Pope, they would have accomplished a constitutional act in a constitutional way. They wrenched the Charter of Henry I. from the king, and thereby drew upon themselves Innocent's excommunication. In his

[1] *Life of Stephen Langton*, chap. v.

eyes they were "disturbers of the king and realm of England".[1] It was not the complaint itself, but the mode of its accomplishment which angered the Pope, who was specially bound to protect John. Langton incurred the Pope's displeasure for not immediately publishing his bull of denunciation against the barons. The Archbishop's own sympathies were with them, and he hoped, by appealing to the Pope, to delay the Bull of Excommunication. Instead of effecting his purpose, he himself was suspended—a punishment he bore in all meekness; but the suspension was removed at Easter, 1215.[2]

Men, who do not believe in monarchy, will not appreciate the policy of Innocent III., as applied to King John. Twice the Chief of Christians saved his kingdom for that worst of kings: once from the consequences of his own impiety, and again when unruly feudal barons would have established English liberty on anarchy, and the subversion of authority.

Pope Innocent III. died on July 16, 1216, and shortly afterwards, in October, King John was suddenly called to his account. Langton survived them both till 1228, and had the privilege of organising the translation of St. Thomas from the crypt, where his martyred body had been hastily buried, to a shrine which had been prepared for him just over it in the chapel of the Holy Trinity in Canterbury cathedral. At the beginning of the sixteenth cen-

[1] *Life of Stephen Langton*, p. 110.

[2] Hurter, *Innocenz der Dritte*, ii. 653; *Life of Stephen Langton*, p. 112.

tury, this shrine had grown in splendour from the offerings of all Christendom. Langton showed a princely magnificence in this act of homage to his great predecessor. He gave notice of the event two years before it took place. A gathering of which England had never seen the like, representatives not merely of English, but of Catholic, nationality, attended the feast on Tuesday, 7th July, 1220. The Archbishop's hospitality provided free entertainment and forage for all pilgrims between London and Canterbury. At Canterbury itself the streets ran wine.[1]

The memory of that July day is still perpetuated in the feast of St. Thomas's Translation. The Pool of Bethsaida itself was a pale figure of the martyr's tomb, which had become a channel of every sort of healing. It was fitting that Langton, who had felt the Plantagenet lash, should inaugurate a new shrine, second to few in Christendom.

[1] *Chronica Monasterii de Melsa*, p. 406.

CHAPTER V.

THE FRIARS (1219).

It was noticed before the French Revolution that all France, as far as that was possible, converged round Paris, and that life and civilisation in the provinces were at a stand-still. Just the contrary was true of town-life in England up to the beginning of the thirteenth century. The monks had been the factors of civilisation to the English people, and they had worked exclusively in the country. In order to obey their call, as they conceived it, they were bound to retire from men and the haunts of men. Thus it was that the whole consequences of their resolution had fallen literally on virgin soil. The towns still awaited their missionaries: in social status they were at a very low ebb. Whilst they were not richer in material appearance or construction than the most remote Irish or Scotch village of to-day, the municipal element was highly developed. Self-government existed to an extraordinary extent with ignorance, squalor, and unsanitariness. The mendicant orders were made for the town just as the monks for the country; and of none is this truer than of the Franciscans. The children of St. Francis

were the first to appear in England, and they remained throughout the most numerous and popular of the friars. When at last the flourishing English province was attainted by the new order of things, Franciscans were in the foremost ranks of champions and martyrs.

The year 1219[1] brought these friars, headed by Fr. Agnellus de Pisa, to England. They were four fathers and five lay brothers who thus came to scatter the seed of St. Francis on English soil. As a rule, the Franciscans built their convents in the most wretched localities. They chose populous sites as the Cistercians had formerly chosen lonely ones, and transformed the spiritual wilderness into a flower garden. In London the chief house of the order rose on a spot appropriately called Stinking Lane. At Cambridge the burgesses gave them the dilapidated town gaol. Again, at Norwich their convent was built on the water side.[2] Poverty was in their sites as well as in their spirit, and it was this poverty which won them the hearts of the people. On landing, four friars set out for London, where they parted company, two of them proceeding to Oxford. Fr. Agnellus and the four others stayed to build their first convent at Canterbury. They brought literally nothing with them but the sweet odour of their lives, nor were they at that time

[1] This date is given by the Franciscan author of *Antiquities of the English Franciscans.*

[2] *Monumenta Franciscana.* Preface by J. S. Brewer, p. xviii.

allowed to possess any money in common. It is said that two of these friars, being overtaken by the night-fall at about a mile from Abingdon, sought admittance at the cell or grange of the great abbey. The porter let them in cautiously, but they were thrust out of doors again when the monks discovered that they were destitute friars. A young monk, who saw them outside, took compassion on them, and showed them to a hay-loft. That night he had a vision, or a remarkable dream, in which he saw our Lord sitting on His throne as Judge, and the grange monks standing before Him. A friar minor was accusing them of cruelty towards men who had given up all things for God's sake. Then our Lord turned to the prior, and asked him to what order he belonged. He replied to St. Benedict's, but St. Benedict, who was there, disowned these men as overthrowers of his institute, which had so specially commanded the exercise of hospitality. Our Lord next looked upon the charitable young monk, making the same inquiry. He, fearing to own himself a Benedictine, said he belonged to the poor man he saw standing there, who was St. Francis.

"Is this true?" asked our Lord.

"He is mine, Lord, he is mine," answered St. Francis, pressing the young man to his heart in so close an embrace that he awoke.

Both the young monk and the Abbot of Abingdon joined the Order of St. Francis.[1]

[1] *Antiquities of the English Franciscans*, pp. 12-15.

The Franciscans multiplied so rapidly that in 1256 their numbers amounted to 1242 in forty-nine houses. As their organisation became more perfect, they were divided into seven Custodies under one provincial. At the time of the dissolution he governed seventy houses.[1] Amongst these were the houses of Sisters. They possessed eight convents, and were for the most part not Poor Clare Colettines but Poor Clare Urbanists. This branch of St. Francis' Order was founded by St. Isabel of France, sister of St. Louis, and thus called after Urban IV. The Poor Clare Urbanists were allowed endowments. The Minories still bears the name which came to it from the Convent of Minoresses, for so these nuns were known.

The abnegation of St. Francis extended to the mind. He would not have his friars too much attached to books and learning, yet God works by contraries. It was the Order of Poverty which was to give the greatest intellects to the Church in England during the Middle Ages. Roger Bacon, born in 1214, and called the *Doctor mirabilis*, was a man whose keen vision penetrated into the secret forces of nature. In learning and natural science he was far in advance of his age, and it is no marvel that he was accused by the uninitiated of magic and the black art. His occult science consisted in great

[1] The author of *Antiquities*, etc., says ninety, but Dr. Gasquet mentions only sixty-two Franciscan houses. See *Henry VIII. and the English Monasteries*, i. Appendix.

astronomical accuracy and a fore-knowledge of the hidden forces contained in steam as a power of locomotion. His Order put restrictions on his ardent spirit as a measure of prudence, and he was confined at different times to his convent. The genius of the man startled the age, and with it his religious superiors.[1] Duns Scotus, a prince of schoolmen, was another Franciscan glory. It is to his teaching on the Immaculate Conception that the Franciscan Order owes its privilege of saying on any Saturday, which is of inferior rank to a double of the second class, a votive Mass of our Lady.

It was likewise during the pontificate of Cardinal Langton that the Dominicans came to England. Thirteen friars, headed by Father Gilbert de Fresnoy, proceeded to Canterbury in 1221. The Archbishop, hearing that they were preachers, asked Father Gilbert to preach to him, and was so pleased with the sermon that he was ever afterwards a supporter of the Order.[2] The Dominicans, or Black Friars, were somewhat less numerous than the Franciscans. They had characteristics of their own, and were the aristocrats among the Friars. As confessors, they vied with Franciscans. The king's conscience was usually directed by a friar, for the Friars were the

[1] See *Kirchenlexicon*, Artikel "Roger Bacon," vol. i., and *Revue des Questions Historiques*: "Les Emprisonnements de Roger Bacon, Juillet," 1891.

[2] Father Raymund Palmer, O.P., *The Provincials of the Friar Preachers*, p. 3.

Jesuits of the Middle Ages. The Dominicans numbered 56 houses at the Dissolution, and at least one convent of Sisters. Princess Bridget, a sister of Queen Elizabeth of York, was a Dominicaness at Dartford.[1] Owing to the loss of the conventual registers,[2] it is not easy to follow the working of the Black Friars in England. There is one glory which St. Dominic shares with only a few: his inheritance has ever remained one and undivided. How soon the Franciscans and Dominicans established their claims may be gathered from the fact that Kilwardby, a Dominican, became Archbishop of Canterbury in 1272, and Peckham, a Franciscan, succeeded him in 1279. Kilwardby was made a cardinal by Pope Nicolas III., but he always wore the Dominican habit, and observed both the letter and the spirit of his rule. Archbishop Peckham was a man of strong character. It will be seen in another place that he was opposed by a saint in consequence, it is supposed, of his excessive claims as primate and metropolitan. On his accession he told the Bishop of Tusculum that "he had put his shoulder to the wheel with the firm resolution of following in the footsteps of Blessed Thomas, for it appeared (to him) that the Church was more contemptuously trampled under foot then than in the days of that holy martyr," and he added, in the fulness of his repugnance for his new dignity, "in the first year of my bitterness".[3]

[1] *Life of Blessed Thomas More*, Bridgett, p. 16.
[2] Fr. R. Palmer, *Provincials*, p. 1. [3] *Epistolæ Joannis Peckham*, p. 22.

A Franciscan training and spirit made him dislike honours and high position, but showed him for that very reason better able to withstand their withering influence on the soul's life.

About 1240 two English knights, John, Lord Vesey, and Richard, Lord Grey, whilst away on the Holy Wars, visited Mount Carmel, where they found some countrymen of their own amongst the followers of the Prophet St. Elias. They brought back a small colony of these hermits, amongst them Ralph Freburn, a Northumbrian, and founded the first Carmelite houses in Europe at Aylesford in Kent and Holn in Northumberland. Ralph Freburn became first English provincial, and gave the habit to Simon Stock, who had prepared himself for the Carmelite noviciate by leading a hermit's life. Simon became general of the whole order in 1245. He was at once a man of prayer and a man of action. His ecstatic prayer gained him a vision of our Lady, in which she gave him the brown scapular as a singular mark of her protection. The oratory of the Carmelite house at Cambridge (Newenham) was said to be the spot of this apparition. Simon gave our Lady's little habit to Edward I. and Edward II. who were then princes. The wretched Edward II. seems to have had some devotion to our Lady. St. Simon Stock died at Bordeaux in 1266.[1] The Carmelites or White Friars numbered forty-one houses in England.[2]

[1] Northcote, *Celebrated Sanctuaries of the Madonna*, p. 285.
[2] Gasquet, i. Appendix.

The fourth mendicant order was that of the Hermits or Friars of St. Augustine. They possessed forty-six convents.[1]

The Servites, the fifth mendicant order, did not come to England in Catholic times.

The Trinitarians were in reality regular canons, and the Crutched (Crossed) Friars were a military order.

Both Dominicans and Franciscans had a zealous supporter in Robert Grossetete, who was Bishop of Lincoln from 1235 to 1253. A Suffolk man of low birth, he was one of those strong natures for whom there is no hiding under the bushel. He had a life-long friendship for these friars, especially for the Franciscans. Some of their number were always with him. He took them on his visitations, and set them to hear confessions. "As the Pope has the fulness of powers for the Universal Church, so has the bishop for his particular diocese, in virtue of power received from the apostolical authority," wrote Grossetete to a correspondent. And again: "Saving that which is reserved to the Pope alone, a bishop can do all things in his diocese".[2]

His manner of doing all things was highly characteristic. He was not born in the purple, nevertheless he was made to command. Contemporaries of his, who were saints, saw the same abuses, yet bore them. Grossetete's zeal overpowered gentleness and tact, and was apt to deal summarily with sinners and

[1] Gasquet, i. Appendix. [2] *Roberti Grossetete Epistolæ*, p. 365.

sin. He could not bide his time, nor imitate the long-suffering of the Heavenly Father, Who lets His sunshine and rainfall profit both the good and the wicked. His impetuosity, however, sprang from his intense love of souls. The slackening of discipline which he found in his diocese may have been partially due to the three years' vacancy preceding his own election. The graver evil of unworthy labourers in the vineyard was provided for in the divine counsels by the advent of the friars. Grossetete looked upon them in this light, and spoke of them to the Pope as the men whose example was to leaven the secular clergy. The minor sins of his priests were the *scotales* or compotations in which they indulged at synods and meetings. The laity on their side had contracted the habit of violating Sundays and feast days with boisterous rioting. Vigils and wakes were turned into drinking bouts.

In a letter to the Archdeacon of Lincoln, Bishop Grossetete speaks of the graver state of things with which he had to contend (1244). Some priests did not say their breviary, or said it badly; others prevented the people from confessing to the friars, and chose preachers who would best know how to extract money. These were not the worst.[1] He had to deal largely with a want of chastity in the clergy; and there were cases of the same falling

[1] His words are: "Habent sacerdotes suas focarias: horas canonicas aut non dicunt, aut corrupte dicunt," etc.—*Epistolæ*, p. 317.

away amongst monks. He writes to the Benedictine Abbey of Fleury to apprise the convent that some subjects, who had sinned in this particular, would be sent to a cell or dependence of the Order.[1]

Grossetete has been upheld for his supposed opposition to the Pope in the matter of subsidies and the nomination of foreigners to English benefices. A son may urge a father not to press for his paternal rights in a particular case. In this sense Grossetete *did* resist his father, the Pope. England is only a small part of the Church, though large enough to feel the disturbances at headquarters. The Romans themselves and the German Emperor prepared the Avignon captivity, with which the successors of Innocent IV. had to contend. Sojourn in France meant security from the ills of the hour, which in Rome were apt to be unruliness in the people, rebellion, and bloodshedding in the streets of the Eternal City. The Papal Court at Lyons had to be kept up by the alms of the faithful. Moreover, the Pope was involved in a long struggle with the emperor, Frederick II., and this, too, required extraordinary subsidies. Thus, occasionally Italians were nominated to English benefices, because the state of Italy made it impossible to provide for them in their own country. The Pope was not in fault. He had to govern the Universal Church, and to meet its needs; whereas

[1] "Mittimus tales ex vobis ad cellam de Menting qui luxuriose cum meretricibus vivunt, proprietarii, inobedientes, commesationibus et ebrietatibus jocisque vacantes," etc.—*Ibid.*

the English saw only the partial side of the question as it affected themselves. They saw, too, not the Pope, but the Pope's legate, who was occasionally an unworthy representative of his master. Whenever this was the case, the legate's sins or shortcomings, his want of religious spirit, it may be, or his tactless behaviour, were all put down to the Pope. England saw such a legate in the early years of King Henry III. In 1226 Magister Otho came to obtain subsidies for the war between Pope and Emperor, then in its earlier stage. Apart from his personal character, which was not the most edifying, if contemporaries are to be trusted, his errand was, naturally speaking, an unpopular one. The nature of the demand, on the Pope's part, was that two prebends in each cathedral church, one on the bishop's mensa, the other on the chapter, should be laid aside for the Holy See, and that monastic houses should contribute in the same way.[1] Otho's petition was put off *sine die* by Henry III., and now in 1244 Magister Martin appeared on the same mission from Innocent IV. He demanded 10,000 marks for the support of the Pope, gave away benefices worth thirty marks a year, a considerable sum in those days, without even asking the patrons, put pressure on the clergy, and showed an unwarrantable readiness to use the arms of excommunication and interdict. Early the following year he had to leave England, not having achieved his

[1] Roger de Wendover, *Flores Historiarum*, iv. 115.

end. His conduct had made him deservedly unpopular.[1]

In 1247 the Papal subsidy was again under the consideration of convocation. A sum of 11,000 marks was voted to the Pope, and collected for him by the Bishops of Winchester and Norwich. The Pope's choice of collectors was sometimes unfortunate. About this time, two Franciscans received the king's licence for the work, provided they used no undue pressure. They rode about the country booted and spurred, and extracted money by all sorts of threats and arguments. When they came to Grossetete, they required him to pay down the sum of 6000 marks. But the bishop, who had himself joyfully collected for his "exiled and oppressed Father" a short time before, absolutely refused to listen to these strange friars. His love for genuine Franciscans put him the more on his guard against the spurious article.[2]

In 1250 the zealous bishop considered it his duty to present a memorandum to Pope Innocent IV. regarding some evils in the Church, which were vexing his own soul. These scandals Grossetete ascribed (1) to unworthy pastors, (2) to the abuse of prerogatives in the episcopate, and (3) to the state of the Papal Court, whose administrators were open to corruption. The zealous bishop did not imitate

[1] *Robert Grossetete, Bischof von Lincoln*, von Dr. Jos. Felten, p. 43.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 50.

the Lord of the harvest as to the tares and the wheat, nor the saints, his contemporaries, in their meek endurance of scandals. Pope Innocent had the memorandum read to him. It is easy for the bishop of one small, or even large, diocese to expose evils, which the Pope knows as well, or rather much better than himself. The difficulty does not lie in seeing, but in remedying them. The Pope cannot do what he would. He has to bear the unchristian conduct of his large family when it *is* unchristian, and utter his protest. The Bishop of Lincoln applied the memorandum addressed to the whole Church to his particular diocese, for which all praise is due to him. His visitations became stricter, his rigour towards those who possessed benefices without the priesthood more marked.[1] He would not have idlers in the Lord's Vineyard. In the beginning of his episcopate he had bestowed a canonry on the nephew of Pope Gregory IX., with the words that "neither death nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers could separate his nothingness from the holy Roman Church," yet to the cursory observer his attitude seemed to have changed, when in 1253 Innocent IV. ordered the bishop to make his nephew, Frederic of Lavagna, a canon of Lincoln. The Pope justly viewed England as part of the Universal Church, therefore he had a perfect right to nominate to benefices, whilst the hardship to the English of having foreigners ignorant

[1] *Robert Grossetete*, p. 69.

of their language set over them for the care of souls was no less real. It was a case of *summum jus summa injuria*. The Bishop of Lincoln, too, was within his right when he remonstrated. He did more. He refused to receive Frederic, and exposed his reasons to Innocent, the Papal secretary in England. Although we can justify his remonstrance, we cannot justify his refusal. The Pope, however, bore in mind the character of the man, and his consistent action with regard to Church discipline, and did not press the point, nor carry out the threatened excommunication.[1] This resistance, coupled with Grossetete's own words, is remarkable. "I well know," he said, "that the right to nominate freely to all benefices belongs to the Pope and the holy Roman Church."[2]

In 1252 Grossetete had instituted an inquiry into the value of benefices possessed by foreigners, and the incredible sum arrived at was 70,000 marks, more than three times the net royal revenue.[3] This custom or provision, as it was called, was settled by a final Bull addressed in November, 1253, to "all English archbishops, bishops, prelates, chapters, convents, ecclesiastical or lay patrons". The sum allotted to Italians beneficed in England was not to exceed 8000 marks. The Pope could compel them to reside and to receive Holy Orders under penalty of deprivation. Those who had the right of patronage were invited to use it in favour of competent

[1] Felten, p. 70. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 69. [3] *Ibid.*, p. 64.

subjects.[1] A solution of the question, which had been so much in Grossetete's thoughts, was thus given a month after his death. He died on October 10, 1253.

The Franciscans, whose house at Oxford was founded about 1221, gave a great impetus to the University. They, who made poverty of spirit their aim, were remarkable for learned men. Some of them taught at Paris with brilliant success. The honour of forming this intellectual body is due to Robert Grossetete. He filled the chair of Regent of Studies in their Oxford convent before becoming bishop, and so devoted was he to them that the popular voice made him a Franciscan. One of his most fruitful actions at the University was to found scholarships for the benefit of poor students. At the end of the fifteenth century there were twenty-four. The capital was entrusted to the Priory of St. Frideswyth to be invested in the best possible way for students without private means.[2] The Franciscan annals show a list of sixty-seven divinity readers at Oxford.[3] Their convent stood on the present site of Wadham College. The names of Grossetete and of his Franciscan friend, Adam de Marisco, are inseparably linked together. Adam was the first of his Order to lecture at Oxford, and he founded or promoted a school there which produced great lights of the English Province—Richard of Coventry, John

[1] Felten, p. 71. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 91.
[3] *Monumenta Franciscana*, Appendix, p. 554.

Wallis, Thomas Dockyng, Thomas Bungay, Peckham, Roger Bacon, and Duns Scotus. Franciscan labours raised the University of Oxford to a rank not second to Paris.[1]

The friars made the towns, and were to them that civilising influence which is born of faith in its highest expression. They preached not a barren faith, but a life of faith, and so they preached with success.

[1] *Monumenta Franciscana*, Preface by Brewer, p. 81.

CHAPTER VI.

THE FRUITFUL SEED (1220-1272).

KING HENRY III. was a good specimen of a very common type, inasmuch as he united what is misnamed piety with a total disregard of his principal duties as sovereign. According to St. Thomas, piety is a prompt disposition to do God's will in all things: according to Henry it resolved itself into pleasure in prayer and externals. The smaller grace is apt to be taken for the great gift. When St. Louis of France urged Henry to hear sermons instead of so many Masses, he answered, with fine and true instinct, "that he preferred seeing his friend to hearing even pleasant things about Him". If Henry's three Masses a day had produced wisdom and fortitude in his conduct, his reign would have been remarkable for something more than its length. That reign belongs to the history of England; but the period in the Church is strongly marked by individual holiness. Saints adorned high places in spite of raging barons and royal favouritism. The Friars, and especially the Franciscans, were a new spur to devotion. In short, there were those instances of

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spiritual phenomena which are ever repeating themselves in the history of the Church. Matthew Paris mentions the death, at Leicester, in 1225, of a girl who, for seven years, had eaten no food except the Holy Eucharist on Sundays.[1] And Trivet speaks of a certain rustic, who had made the stigmata on his body, and was condemned to perpetual imprisonment at the first synod held by Archbishop Langton at Oxford. The reality and its counterfeit are never wanting.[2]

John had died prematurely and unexpectedly. He hardly knew whether he was clear of his barons; and, in point of fact, they were a cause of disturbance all through his son's reign. Possibly the very existence of unruly barons is partially due to the Angevin habit of taking foreign favourites. Henry carried on this disastrous inheritance. Committed at first, on account of his youth, to Peter des Roches and Hugh de Burgh, justiciary of England, he prolonged his state of tutorship, and was always in unworthy hands. The interests of Church and State were subordinated to the favourites of the hour, who were insatiable in their demands. The king was always out of pocket, and obliged to have recourse to perpetual subsidies. Two out of the three modes of taxation fell upon the clergy, *viz.*, the donum, affecting all holders of land, and the tenth, seventh, and thirteenth. The remaining impost, the scutage, laid all tenants in chivalry under contribu-

[1] *Chronica Major*, p. 101. [2] *Annales Sex Regum*, p. 177.

tion. It was only in cases of sore necessity that all three methods were levied at once.[1] Furthermore, Henry III. was wont to prolong vacancies in sees and abbeys, because it served his purpose to dispose of their revenues. This was no new custom on the king's part, but it was not what was to be expected from a man who heard three Masses a day. Piety which stops at external acts is of little avail.

Archbishop Langton died in 1228, and was succeeded by Richard of Canterbury, whose short pontificate came to a close in 1231. A long vacancy followed, and then an unanimous election in favour of a canon of Salisbury, Edmund Rich, better known to us as St. Edmund of Canterbury. He was the son of a tradesman at Abingdon, and of a holy mother, named Mabilia, who taught him from his earliest years the science of the saints. Some mothers can make their sons what they like, whether from the fulness of their own desires, or the working of grace in their children. How well Mabilia succeeded may be gathered from the fact that the whole of Edmund's life belonged to God. He seems never to have even faltered on his path. His father, Reynold, with Mabilia's consent, retired from the world, and made his religious profession at Evesham Abbey. Mabilia practised the austerities of the saints, and very early initiated her sons into her secrets. Edmund studied first at Oxford, and afterwards in Paris. His mother's parting gift to her

[1] Stubbs, *Constitutional History*, i. 582.

sons was a hair-shirt. Edmund was recalled from Paris by Mabilia's fatal illness, and charged by her on her deathbed with the care of his brother and two sisters. The latter simplified his task by declaring that they wished to become religious. He chose for them the Benedictine convent of Catesby, Northamptonshire, on account of the purity of its discipline.

The peaceful days of childhood and of university, full of faith and penance, were a fit preparation for the after time of struggle and combat. Edmund Rich was the first to teach Aristotle's logic at Oxford, where he remained from 1219 to 1226. At length he was prevailed on to accept a canonry at Salisbury, and when by his holiness and learning he had attracted the eyes of men, he came into conflict with Henry III. The whole country was protesting against the king's unconstitutional conduct in unduly exalting favourites in the place of his legitimate counsellors, the Barons of England. When the bishops in a Council at Westminster, 1233, proceeded to excommunicate some of the individuals, Des Roches amongst the number, who were thus destroying the peace of the kingdom, the remonstrances of the Church produced a certain effect for the time. Edmund was consecrated on April 2, 1234, and soon afterwards, availing himself of his position, spoke so strongly to the king as to bring about the dismissal of Des Roches and his foreign mercenaries.[1] But in general the pontificate of St.

[1] Trivet, *Annales Sex Regum*, p. 236.

Edmund was remarkable for its failures. As Archbishop he relaxed none of his former habits. His table was outwardly splendid, yet in the midst of opulence he contrived to practise great mortification. He was always accompanied by a Dominican, and for his chancellor he had Richard Wiche, bishop of Chichester in 1245, afterwards canonised.

At that time the land rang with the name of Simon de Montfort. The first Simon had represented the cause of English liberties, and given prominence to the two orders of Lords and Commons as a constitutional body. His son, also called Simon, followed him as a popular leader. He married Eleanor, the king's sister, she being the widow of the Earl Marshal. St. Edmund had authorised Eleanor to make a vow of chastity, and was by no means edified to hear of her intended marriage to De Montfort. Henry III. appealed above the Archbishop to the Holy See, and obtained the desired dispensation, for which, it seems, there were urgent political reasons.[1] St. Edmund and the barons protested, inasmuch as the king had not consulted them on the subject. The barons had recourse to their usual alternative, an appeal to arms, and were headed by Henry's brother, Richard of Cornwall. Simon was then in favour with the king, and he crushed the rising. However urgent the marriage may have been in itself, Henry had

[1] *Documents Illustrative of the Reign of Henry III.*, edited by Shirley.

openly defied St. Edmund's authority. The barons fared no better than the Primate. The king was constantly angering them by the over-favour which he showed to the queen's relations.

It is curious to note how differently the same state of things was met by different characters. The special grievance which weighed heavily upon St. Edmund's gentle soul was the king's habit of holding benefices in his own hands, and then, after a considerable lapse of time, nominating men for no other reason than that they suited himself. Bishop Grossetete's life-long struggle was to promote worthy nominations to the charge of souls, and for this end he used every possible effort. St. Edmund followed another line of action. He did indeed obtain a Bull from Gregory IX., which empowered him to fill vacant benefices in case the king nominated no one within six months after the incumbent's death, but upon Henry's remonstrances this Bull was withdrawn. Unwilling to see evils which he could not remedy, Edmund followed the example of St. Thomas of Canterbury, and went into exile. The Cistercian Abbey of Pontigny now opened its gates to a third Archbishop of Canterbury. Edmund could hold up his arms in prayer for the souls committed to his pastoral charge, and benefit them by his absence. This at least we may take to be the meaning of his flight. He filled even a Cistercian solitude with the fragrance of his holiness, and of that ecstatic prayer which had always been a feature of his piety.

He died at Soissy in Champagne on 16th November, 1242, and fulfilled his promise of returning to Pontigny on St. Edmund's day. On the feast of St. Edmund, king and martyr, his body was conveyed to Pontigny, where it now rests. Thus, two out of the three holy English Edmunds had gained their crown.

The Constitutions of St. Edmund drawn up by him in 1236 show some of the evils with which he had to contend: simony and immorality in the clergy are the chief. There are penalties against mothers who overlay their children, a common misfortune in those days as evidenced by canons of Councils. "In some cases the parents were obliged to go into a monastery for this offence: in others to do penance for three years, and for seven if drunkenness or any other sin were the occasion of their overlaying a child."[1] All are admonished to confess to their parish priest once a year, an obligation as long as the parochial system was in full force.

St. Edmund's successor was elected in his lifetime, that is, in 1240. Boniface of Savoy was a Carthusian, and uncle of the Queen of England, Eleanor of Provence. He was known as the "Absalom of Savoy," but physical beauty was far from being his greatest gift. He was consecrated by the Pope himself in 1245, and one of his first acts as archbishop was to obtain a papal privilege to enable him to pay off the debts of the archiepiscopal see.

[1] Alban Butler, 16th November, vol. ii. p. 877.

It was to the effect that for seven years every vacant benefice of the province should make a loan of its first year's revenue to the See of Canterbury. Moreover, he urged his right of making a general visitation and of requiring an offering at the same time. Boniface had the archiepiscopal debts in view, but his brethren of the episcopal bench and the laity generally did not look with favour upon his proceedings in this respect.[1]

Richard Wiche had been chancellor of the archdiocese under St. Edmund. A saint himself, he had enjoyed the intimacy of St. Edmund, and followed him to France. Now, the new Archbishop maintained him in his office of chancellor, and entrusted to him the care of the whole diocese. But he could scarcely have exercised this charge under Boniface, for the see of Chichester had become vacant in 1244, and what happened on this occasion may be taken as a fair specimen of the king's mode of proceeding. He recommended Robert Passelew, a worthless court favourite, to be the new bishop, but was opposed by Archbishop Boniface, who declared Robert totally unfitting, and nominated Richard in his stead.[2] Thereupon the king seized the temporalities of the see, and for two years persecuted and harassed the new bishop in every way. St. Richard was consecrated by Innocent IV. in 1245, after which he retired to a lonely place in Sussex, where he was

[1] Felten, *Robert Grossetete, Bischof von Lincoln*, p. 59.

[2] Alban Butler, 3rd April, vol. i. p. 424.

lodged by a priest, the only person in his diocese who ventured to stretch out a helping hand. It was necessary to threaten Henry with excommunication before he would allow Richard to take possession of his see, and when he yielded to the fear of spiritual arms, the Chichester revenues were sadly impoverished, this being the usual effect produced on Church lands by the royal guardianship. The loss of temporal goods did not affect St. Richard, but only served to perfect his charity. The holy and gentle Bishop of Chichester reserved his anger for one single cause. He was rigidly severe with priests who had sinned against chastity, and would never consent to mitigate the punishment exacted by the canons of the time. St. Richard died the death of the saints at the Hospital of God's House, Dover, still called Maison Dieu, on 3rd April, 1253. Both he and St. Edmund, his friend, were canonised shortly after their death.

Matthew Paris has described Archbishop Boniface as struggling to meet the respective demands of king and Pope for frequent subsidies. Henry's need of money has been explained and was inexcusable. The Pope, on the other hand, had to sustain a long strife with the Emperor Frederick II., which was the forerunner of the Avignon captivity. Gregory IX. had died in 1241 without carrying out his plan of appealing to Christendom through a general council. Celestine IV., his successor, reigned a bare fortnight, and all this time the Roman Emperor was devastat-

ing the states of the Church, and threatening by his deeds to prolong the vacancy. St. Edmund was still alive, but out of the country, and Boniface, who was elected during Edmund's lifetime, had not come to it. In the Primate's absence the Bishops of Lincoln, Norwich, and Carlisle, under the presidency of the Archbishop of York, resolved to invite the emperor to give up persecuting the Church, whilst, imitating the early Christians, they ordered special prayers and fasting in England for the restoration of its free action. Innocent IV. was elected in 1243, and soon afterwards, in order to be independent of Frederick, left Rome in disguise to take up his abode at Lyons, where at length he was able to call the general council. Bishop Grossetete of Lincoln was present at it, and testified afterwards to the Pope's genuine need of funds. In this council Innocent settled that the Holy See should dispose of not more than twelve benefices in England. For the needs of the Church, he and the cardinals were to contribute a tenth for three years, the clergy a twentieth.[1] The emperor was deposed. As, however, he did not submit to the sentence, but continued his warfare, the Pope's position did not improve. It is true, therefore, that between the king and the Pope the nation was severely taxed, and equally true that the continual demands for subsidies were not graciously received. At that time England was part of Christendom, and had to bear its burdens. *Now*, being cut

[1] Felten, p. 47.

off from the rest of the world in things spiritual, it is free to spend its own money on itself and its needs—if that is an advantage.

Archbishop Boniface, then, vainly tried to extend his spiritual jurisdiction. His attempt was opposed as contrary to the canons. Innocent IV. (1252) ruled that the Archbishop's visitation should be restricted to diocesan officials, and non-exempt conventual churches. It was to last one or two days and the costs not to exceed four marks.[1]

Simon de Montfort on his side was the popular leader. The king, who had sworn to observe the Provisions of Oxford for the reformation of abuses in Church and State, evaded his promises, and once more the barons rose up against him. Both Henry and his son were taken prisoners, and then Simon, being in temporary authority over the land, called the first parliament in 1265. It was fashioned on the model of Church synods, which had been regularly held since Archbishop Theodore's time, and had been to a certain extent representative assemblies. Now for the first time citizens and burgesses were called upon to assist the knights and nobles and prelates in their deliberations. Earl Simon did not long survive this great stroke. He fell at Evesham, one of the ignoble battles fought between king and barons. He was always true to the Church and, according to his view, faithful to the State. He was fighting for constitutional privi-

[1] Felten, p. 61.

leges in an unconstitutional age. Loyalty to Henry III. was a difficult matter, but there is nothing to prove that Simon was wanting in devotedness to monarchical principles. On him, a near connection, fell the full force of a capricious temper, and a will only obstinate for unroyal aims.

In the Church the corresponding event to the calling of Parliament was the consecration of Westminster Abbey in 1269. A magnificent shrine of gold and precious stones was prepared for St. Edward's body, which was borne by the king himself on the opening day, as, surrounded by the princes of his house, he took part in the great procession. Henry was never wanting in an outward act of faith and piety. The history of England has been linked with the fortunes of Westminster Abbey since its foundation day, and it was in the Chapter House that the first parliament sat.

Archbishop Boniface died in 1270 in the odour of sanctity. He was beatified in 1838,[1] his memory bearing the test of many centuries. Another great saint lent the bright example of his holiness to the troubled times of Henry III., although he actually became a bishop only in the following reign. Thomas Cantilupe, Bishop of Hereford, came of a noble and stirring race, still belonging to the peerage,[2] and was himself the noblest of all, a man wholly

[1] Felten, *Robert Grossetete, Bischof von Lincoln*, p. 58.

[2] In the person of Earl de la Warr, whose eldest son bears the title of Viscount Cantelupe.

given up to God from his earliest years. After the fashion of the times he went both to Oxford and to Paris. At Oxford he studied at the house of the Black Friars, and there is reason to believe that he received an earlier training from Robert Kilwardby. His university days throw light upon the times when a sudden quarrel between a legate's brother and a student could lead to blood-shedding, the legate abruptly leaving Oxford, and threatening the University with excommunication. The evil was averted by the mediation of Robert Grossetete, who was Oxford's father and protector.

Again, under the chancellorship of Thomas, we are introduced to a strange scene at Oxford. During the civil disturbances of Henry's reign, a visit from Prince Edward or his approach, 1263, was not viewed as an honour. The Mayor ordered the city gates to be fast closed. "At dinner time the big bell of St. Mary's was tolled. All left their meat and ran to their swords, bows, slings, and bills; gathering together in a body, they fought most courageously, wounded many of the townspeople, and forced the rest to fly. The Provost's house was burnt; William the Espycer's was broken up, with all the spicery itself, from one den to the other, and most of the goods therein spoiled. At the house of the Mayor, who was a vintner, they drank as much wine as they could, and wasted the rest." [1]

Charity to poor scholars was a characteristic of St.

[1] *Life of St. Thomas of Hereford*, Supplement, p. 221.

Thomas Cantilupe. Where all were dear they were dearest. He supported two, and often pleaded the cause of others with his rich relations.

The death of Archbishop Boniface in 1270 was followed by a long vacancy. Almost the last act of Henry III. concerned the nomination of his successor at Canterbury. The Pope, at Henry's desire, made the appointment, and his choice fell upon Robert Kilwardby, a Dominican friar of brilliant reputation (1272). The king died shortly afterwards, and a regency was formed, pending the return of Prince Edward from the Holy Land. He did not arrive in England till the summer of 1274, when he was crowned by the new Archbishop.

It was Kilwardby's privilege to be the early friend and confessor of Thomas Cantilupe, and in 1275 his consecrator to the see of Hereford. Kilwardby and his successor, Peckham, both holy men, used a very different measure to the Bishop of Hereford. The career of the Dominican as Primate was shortened by design of the Pope, who promoted him to the Cardinalate with the intention of using his talents out of England, *viz.*, for the conversion of the Tartars. Death overtook him at Viterbo, where Pope Nicolas III. was holding his court (1279).[1]

Many trials fell to the share of St. Thomas. The strangest of all was his disagreement with the great Franciscan Archbishop Peckham, who succeeded Kilwardby, and was also a Papal nomination. The

[1] Fr. Raymund Palmer, *Provincials of the Friar Preachers*, p. 6.

exact nature of the contest has remained obscure, but it is supposed that Peckham exceeded his powers as Metropolitan, and was arbitrary in his episcopal acts. The bishops appear to have been in their right when they considered that Peckham had gone beyond his jurisdiction in certain questions of appeal from the Bishops' Court to the Court of Arches. Moreover, St. Thomas had a private controversy with him occasioned by their respective officials. The Bishop of Hereford complained that the Canterbury official had interfered too quickly in a particular case, and thus checked the usual course of ecclesiastical proceedings: the official appealed first to his bishop, and then to the Court of Arches. Thus St. Thomas was of opinion that his rights as bishop had been disregarded, and that it was his duty to take the case to Rome.

Before he started to plead his own cause both he and his official were excommunicated by the too hasty official of Canterbury. He betook himself to Martin IV. at Orvieto, who received him most kindly, but his suit was never heard before an earthly tribunal. He died of a sudden sickness at Montefiascone (1282).

The end of this, the last canonised saint of Catholic England, is full of significance, all the more so that the shadow of the cross falls upon it. He died under sentence of excommunication from his Metropolitan, which was no doubt repealed by the Pope, as it is said that Peckham would not allow the Bishop's

remains to receive Christian burial till he had seen the Papal absolution. The value of St. Thomas's proceeding is hardly realised by those who have not thought of the dangers attending an undue exercise of great powers. Shortly after that seeming failure of his death God began to glorify him by miracles. Through his intercession forty dead were raised to life.[1] He was canonised in 1320 at the petition of Edward II. The great examples of holiness in the century following St. Thomas's martyrdom would seem to be the special blessing produced by his blood. The saints, who thus filled the Church with the fragrance of their sweetness, were outwardly failures. No one of them carried out his desires for God's glory, and yet each did his appointed work.

The history of the following reigns suggests the same thought with regard to the Church.

[1] *Life and Gests of St. Thomas of Hereford*, p. 155.

CHAPTER VII.

THE THREE EDWARDS (1272-1377).

THE new king was as strong as his father had been weak. Edward I. is accounted one of England's best kings. It is certain that he developed the failing peculiar to human greatness in tyranny over the spiritual power, and the narrow spirit of nationalism. To be English before all things may apply to the State: it does not apply to the Church as the kingdom of all nations. Edward came to the throne in the pride of his thirty-three years, a thorough Englishman, with no liking for foreign favourites. He broke therefore at once with the habits of the preceding reign. His faults were the faults of strength, not those of weakness, and were as disastrous to the Church as his father's had been to the State.

Edward was crowned in 1274 by Archbishop Kilwardby, nearly two years after his father's death, but it was with the two immediate successors of Kilwardby that he came into conflict. His own death alone ended the strife with Archbishop Winchelsey, who had constantly opposed his behaviour towards the Church.

When Archbishop Kilwardby left England at the Pope's request, Edward wished for the nomination of Robert Burnell, Bishop of Bath and Wells, but the Holy See conferred the archiepiscopal see on John Peckham, a well-known Franciscan (1279). The new Archbishop was admirably suited to the post, and amidst the splendours of Canterbury was ever mindful of the simplicity of St. Francis. Strict and untiring in his visitations, he looked himself into the smallest details, and was no acceptor of persons. The Synod of Lambeth, held by Peckham in 1281, shows that the practice of Communion under one kind had been universally adopted. In the second canon, "parish priests, when they administer the Holy Communion, are enjoined to acquaint the more ignorant of the laity that the Body and Blood of our Saviour, or the integrity of the Sacrament, is contained under the single species of Bread. They are likewise to teach them that what they receive in the chalice is unconsecrated wine, and given them only that they may swallow the other species with more convenience. For," as the Canon goes on, "the Blood of our Lord, under the species of consecrated Wine, is allowed only to the priest that celebrates."[1] Edward had cautioned the Synod not to violate the rights of the Crown: Peckham replied by inviting him to fulfil his royal part by the Church, and to extirpate evil "Customs," which St. Thomas had condemned by his martyrdom.

[1] *Antiquities of the English Franciscans*, p. 94.

But the great protest of the synod was against the famous statutes of Mortmain. An alteration in the conveyance of land was effected by these laws, to the profit, as Edward supposed, of the crown. The first statute was passed in 1279. All alienations in Mortmain being forbidden, the measure affected the Church in this way: estates could not be bequeathed to corporate bodies, consequently not to religious foundations, because estates so bequeathed would have been held in perpetual succession instead of reverting ultimately to the feudal lord. The statute of 1279 forbade the Church to acquire lands by will or purchase without the consent of the feudal lord. An expedient was discovered to evade its working. The interested parties came to a secret understanding: the body wishing to obtain the land set up a fictitious title, and the real proprietor, by collusion, suffered judgment to be given against him.[1] This evasion was foiled to a certain extent by a new statute in 1285, under which any fraud in cases of the kind was punished by forfeiture to the immediate lord. The clergy nevertheless were ingenious in expedients: one was that of conveying estates, not to the body corporate, but to others for its use.[2] Probably the very repression of bequests to the Church stimulated zeal. Many men thought themselves quite justified in eluding the law. The spirited protest of Peckham, however, was made in vain.

[1] Lingard, *History of England*, iii. 273.

[2] *Ibid.*, iii. 274.

After the synod was over the Archbishop set out on a visitation of his whole diocese. The evils in the Church were largely occasioned by pluralists and non-resident pastors. The nomination of worthy bishops was a subject he strenuously impressed on Edward I.

One of the worst royal customs opened the Church to creatures of the king, who had no care for the sheep, being worldly and mercenary. The Bishop of Lichfield at that time happened to be a foreigner, who had always lived out of his diocese. The Archbishop summoned him publicly to return under pain of deprivation. Other instances of his chastisements are on record. On one Sir Osburn Gyfford the full severity of a canonical penance was imposed for his conduct towards two nuns at Wilton.[1] In his care for those consecrated to God, the Archbishop forbade the said Sir Osburn ever to speak again to a nun, or to go into a convent. A priest in the diocese of Chichester he sentenced to three years' penance for want of chastity.

Some years later, in 1290, the Archbishop gave sentence in a case which had been long pending between Worcester Cathedral and the Worcester Franciscans. The body of a certain H. Poche had been carried off by main force and buried in the cathedral churchyard, whereas the friars alleged that he had wished to be buried with them. The Archbishop to whom they appealed decreed "that if at

[1] *Antiquities of the English Franciscans*, p. 97.

any time the friars minor can make a legal proof that the corpses of dead persons are left them by will, they may freely carry them to be interred in their own place of burial, after Mass has been said for the deceased in the cathedral church, provided that the said church loses nothing thereby". He added characteristically: "We neither can nor ought to see the friars beaten without shedding tears". He ordered, in consequence, that the corpse of H. Poche should be delivered within a fortnight to the friars under penalty of suspension to the prior and seniors of Worcester Abbey. "Thus ended the process, and the Franciscans buried the dead." [1]

Whilst Archbishop Peckham was intent on the cause of the Church, Edward was bent on the conquest of Scotland and Wales. When not legislating, he was fighting. His judicial turn of mind made him foreseeing; and it was clear to him that the King of England should unite Wales and Scotland under his sceptre. As a rule, he did not wage idle wars for empty honour and glory: his campaigns were the result of inward conviction, but none the less his revenue was not equal to their demands. The ordinary royal revenue at this period was £65,000: the extraordinary £150,000.[2] All through his reign Edward was working the question of subsidies. He saw the end, and did not care what

[1] *Antiquities of the English Franciscans*, p. 103.

[2] Stubbs, *Constitutional History*, ii. 547.

means he took thereunto. Both his legislation and his wars fell heavily on the Church.

On the renewal of the Welsh campaign, in 1282, two provincial councils, one for the province of York, the other for the province of Canterbury, were called to consider the ever-recurring subject of supplies. A thirtieth was contributed by the commons. The clergy, it seems, contributed promises; but Edward satisfied himself by seizing the treasure of the Temple, destined for the Crusade—an act of aggression which drew upon him the censures of the Pope. Archbishop Peckham was ordered to go to the king, remonstrate with him, and demand restitution.

Edward's action with regard to ecclesiastical tribunals was equally hostile. The foundation of these courts was the Conqueror's best act. Every ambitious sovereign chafed at the results which they entailed in putting ecclesiastics outside the law of the land. Edward restricted their jurisdiction to merely spiritual matters, "such as offences for which penance was due," questions relating "to tithes, mortuaries, churches and churchyards, injuries done to clerks, perjury and defamation".[1] This was his way of replying to a complaint made by the Canterbury clergy (1285). Their grievance was that the king's court issued prohibitions on suits entered in the ecclesiastical courts, and thus nullified the action of these courts.

[1] Stubbs, *Const. Hist.*, ii. 119.

Before Edward returned, in 1289, from his three years' absence in France, he made a new vow of crusade, a device which obtained him a grant of an ecclesiastical tenth for six years. The crusade itself was never undertaken. The expulsion of the Jews, in the following year, took more money out of the kingdom. Popular opinion had been so strong against them that their lives were in peril. The Franciscans were the champions of the Jews, just as they would have been of any other down-trodden, persecuted race, out of pure love for their divine Lord. They usually settled in the Hebrew quarters, and, on one occasion, saved seventy Jews from death, by interceding for them with the king. The price they paid for this charitable deed was the refusal of the people to give them alms.[1] The Father of all Christians had set them an example by taking the hated race under his protection. There were no Jews in England from the days of Edward till Cromwell.[2]

In connection with the death of Queen Eleanor, in 1290, may be mentioned the crosses which Edward erected to her memory at every place where her coffin stopped on its road from Lincolnshire to Westminster. These crosses were nine in number, *viz.*, at Lincoln, Northampton, Stony Stratford, Woburn, Dunstable, St. Alban's, Waltham, Cheap, and Charing. Each was made of stone, and

[1] Green, *History of the English People*, p. 198. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 199.

elaborately carved, and was intended to be a perpetual reminder to the wayfarer of Eleanor's soul.[1]

Bishop Burnett of Bath and Wells, who had been the king's prime minister since 1278, was not long in following Queen Eleanor. When proposed by Edward at that time (1278) for the see of Canterbury, he had been rejected by Rome.[2] Later on the king would have had him promoted to Winchester but for a second opposition from the Holy See. There is thus reason to suppose that Edward's choice of him as a counsellor was unfortunate.

Archbishop Peckham died in 1292, and there followed a vacancy, during which the king showed more than his usual determination to extort money from the clergy. His behaviour on this occasion may have influenced Pope Boniface's subsequent act in protecting the clergy generally from similar demands. A prospective war with France was now added to the campaigns at home, and, as usual, subsidies were wanting. Edward summoned both provinces of clergy to meet at Westminster in 1294. Already, however, he had seized "all the coined money and treasure in the sacristies of the monasteries and cathedrals.[3] He apologised to the Assembly for this act of violence, and then asked for further aid. The proposal to give him two-tenths for a year infuriated him. He declared he would have half the spiritual

[1] Rock, *Church of our Fathers*, iii. 47.

[2] Stubbs, *Const. Hist.*, ii. 126.

[3] *Ibid.*

revenue of the clergy or outlaw them. They would consent, they said, if the statute *de religiosis*, otherwise *Mortmain*, were repealed. "This could not be done unconstitutionally," was the king's reply. He, nevertheless, acted unconstitutionally by them, and took the subsidy which they had refused to grant. Moreover, "he seized all the alien priories to the number of about one hundred, and used their revenues," that is the sum hitherto sent abroad to the parent monastery beyond the seas, "for the prosecution of his French war".[1]

In the meantime, Robert Winchelsey was unanimously elected to the see of Canterbury (1294). His qualities of mind—he had been rector of the University of Paris—his gracious and winning manners, specially fitted him for a post which was by no means all honour and glory. As a matter of fact he was at once involved in the demands of the king on the one hand and in the resistance offered by the clergy on the other. The question, how far concessions might be made to the royal power by the Church in this matter of subsidies, was no easy one to solve, even for an Archbishop of Canterbury, under a sovereign of Edward I.'s ambition. In 1296 it was taken out of his hands by Boniface VIII., who published his celebrated bull *clericis laicos* to meet these particular circumstances. In it he forbade the clergy "to pay, and the secular powers to enact,

[1] Gasquet, *Henry VIII. and the English Monasteries*, i. 43.

under penalty of excommunication, contributions or taxes, tenths, twentieths, hundredths, or the like, from the revenues or the goods of the churches or their ministers".[1] When, therefore, the king next appealed to the clergy for subsidies in November, 1296, Winchelsey made answer "that they could not disobey the Pope, and that their contributing anything at all was no longer possible". They so far compromised the matter as to come to a private arrangement, which allowed individuals to take their part in what the whole body could not lawfully do. The northern province yielded in spite of the Pope: the southern province resisted, and paid the penalty for its loyalty. The king seized the lay-fees of its clergy: Winchelsey protested and excommunicated the aggressors. All through the year 1297 the Archbishop was considering the bull *clericis laicos*. Boniface VIII. had qualified it by another, at the request of the King of France, "in which he had exempted voluntary gifts of money, and all taxes necessary for national defence," from the prohibition.[2] This concession seems to have been unknown to Archbishop Winchelsey and the English clergy, as, issued in February, 1297, it had not come before them in August. Delay did not alter their opinion. They could not disobey the Pope. On his side the king pledged himself to take what they could not give. The barons, with no Pope behind them,

[1] Stubbs, ii. 130. [2] *Ibid.*, ii. 139.

proved far more unruly than the clergy. As it was, Edward never forgave Archbishop Winchelsey for the crisis of 1297, which had been none of his making.

His position became still more difficult in 1299, when Boniface claimed Scotland as a fief of the Holy See, presumably to secure it from the molestation of Edward. It is clear that the Chief of the Christian people and the King of England might take a totally different view of that kingdom and of its prospects. Edward rightly thought it should be under the English sceptre, whilst Pope Boniface could justifiably seek to preserve Scottish independence as a matter of justice to the Scottish nation. First of all Edward submitted the question to his barons in Parliament, and then forwarded to Rome an account of his claim. Winchelsey's non-co-operation on this occasion moved Edward to vindictive conduct towards him after the death of Pope Boniface. He was accused of treasonable designs in the Parliament of Lincoln (1301), and consequently called to appear before the Papal Court (1306). In all probability Winchelsey's only fault lay in the situation. He owed spiritual allegiance to the Pope, yet, if he paid it, he offended the king. On the other hand, he was undoubtedly a champion of the liberties of the subject against the abuse of the royal prerogative. He did not return to England during Edward's lifetime, but was fully acquitted of the charge made against him by Edward.[1]

[1] Lingard, *History of England*, iii., 268. See note.

Anthony Bek, bishop of Durham in 1283, was a great contrast to Archbishop Winchelsey, and enjoyed the favour of Edward I. The see of Durham was originally the see of Lindisfarne, and its chief glories were connected with St. Cuthbert. It was one of the three palatinates, and the most renowned. Chester and Lancaster constituted the others. In course of time the bishop, whose see was a palatinate, came to exercise *Jura Regalia* within its boundaries. Durham was called " terra beati Cuthberti ".[1] Thus it is that the meek possess the land in a literal sense, over and above the heavenly country, which alone they desire.

Edward I. carried with him to the tomb his grudge against the ecclesiastical court. One of his last acts was to make a formal complaint on the subject to Clement V. Domination was Edward's ruling thought, and whatever clashed with it either in Church or State was an abiding source of irritation.

When Winchelsey returned to England, he found the sceptre in far different hands. Edward II. was a pleasure-seeker all his life, with no notion of the responsibilities of royalty. He disregarded his promise to his dying father, and continued his riotous existence with foreign favourites. Policy he had none. The great aims for which his father had toiled and reigned were lost sight of in the unworthy pursuits of the hour. The example of both king and queen had probably a great deal to say to the dis-

[1] *Registrum Palatinum Dunelmense.* See Preface by Hardy, p. 67.

soluteness which prevailed before the outbreak of the Black Death. Whether the king's passion was for war or for amusement, he equally required funds. The insufficiency of the royal revenue in those times was a source of constant irritation both to king and barons. When the pleasure took a particularly obnoxious form, as with Edward II., the barons were the more unyielding. These perpetual demands for subsidies, as well as the general emptiness of the royal treasury, told upon the Church. On his return to England Winchelsey was instructed by the Pope to complain of the fines levied upon religious houses by nobles, and of the squandering of sees and benefices when in the king's hands.

Robert Winchelsey survived his persecutor six years, and died a holy death in May, 1313. The best proof that he had never been a traitor was the fact that his canonisation was at one time contemplated. Through the vicissitudes of his life and office he was a man of prayer, and distinguished by a great devotion to the Passion and to our Lady. His successor, Walter Reynolds, Bishop of Worcester, was a man of less strong character. The new Archbishop found himself at once involved in the question of the Templar property. This military order had done a real work in the Holy Land, but when banished from it, the chosen sphere of activity seemed to be removed, for the spirit of chivalry should be fed by noble deeds. Serious charges were made against the knights throughout Christendom, and after thorough

investigation, Clement V. finally suppressed the Order (1312) as a measure of expediency. His Bull disposed at the same time of the property left by the Templars, and ordered that it should be transferred to the Knights Hospitallers. Edward II. demurred to this, and it was only eleven years later that the bill of transfer passed through Parliament.[1]

In the meantime Archbishop Reynolds had to deal on the one hand with a king and nobility hungry after treasure, and on the other with the Pope's positive commands as to how it was to be applied. At first his own line of conduct was not absolutely blameless, since he, together with other bishops, began to appropriate the spoils. In deference too to Edward he called a council, not as hitherto a convocation, in order to consider the question of supplies. The clergy indignantly refused to be appealed to through a council for a purely temporal object.

Edward had strongly advocated the election of Walter Reynolds, who had been his tutor, and was now raised by his influence to be the first peer spiritual and temporal of the realm. At the time of Reynold's accession Gaveston had not long fallen a victim to the general execration, and soon the defeat of Bannockburn was to prove Edward's incapacity for fulfilling another of his father's requests. Considering that he was somewhat of a king's man, the conduct of Reynolds as primate

[1] Lingard, *History of England*, iii. 350.

was fairly independent, and it became more so as time went on, and the worthless character of Edward II. was more fully revealed. In order to strengthen his power as Metropolitan he obtained eight Bulls from Clement V., by which, amongst other privileges, he reserved to himself the exclusive right for three years of visitation in his province : that of visiting all religious houses without exception, and of absolving at his visitation those who should confess to him.[1]

One, at least, undoubted encroachment of the royal power against the Church occurred under Walter's pontificate. It was the case of Adam Orlton, bishop of Hereford. In the Parliament of 1323, he was accused, rightly or wrongly, of high treason. He appealed to the judgment of his Metropolitan and fellow-bishops, who fully supported him, but notwithstanding Reynold's requirement that the Bishop should be tried and judged in the spiritual courts, he was summoned before what became then or shortly afterwards the court of King's Bench. At the first sitting, proceedings were interrupted by the entrance of the Archbishop, followed by the whole Hierarchy, who demanded the release of the Bishop of Hereford, under threat of excommunication. They succeeded in carrying him off, but Edward retaliated by calling a lay council at Westminster, who sat upon the bishop, and brought him in guilty.

[1] Hook, *Lives of Archbishops of Canterbury*, iii. 472.

Adam de Orlton was the first bishop since Augustine's time who was judged by a lay court.[1] It will be seen from this incident that, however weak in many things, Edward was tenacious of his own authority, which he supposed to be called in question.

When he was cruelly put to death in September, 1327, neither Church nor barons stood by him. Something had altered the attitude of Walter Reynolds towards his sovereign, for from being his chosen counsellor, the Archbishop had gone over to the queen's party. It is not difficult to explain the universal alienation of England from Edward II. A Tudor in his place would have imposed all his worthlessness upon the country under the cover of the royal prerogative, but the barons of those days had not had half the life beaten out of them by the Wars of the Roses. Archbishop Reynolds died in the autumn of 1327. Between the years 1320-1325 the festival of Corpus Christi was introduced into England from Belgium, its birthplace.[2]

The reign of a new King began almost simultaneously with the accession of a new Primate, 1327. Edward III. was only fifteen at the time of his father's ignominious death, and he did not at first shake off the bondage of Isabella and Mortimer. When Isabella ceased to misgovern the country, and was forced into retirement, Edward acted on the Pope's advice to spare

[1] Hook, *Lives of Archbishops of Canterbury*, iii. 481.

[2] *History of the Holy Eucharist in England*, Fr. Bridgett, ii. 266.

her as much as possible, and not to expose her conduct. Simon Mepeham, the Primate who succeeded Reynolds, was good and peaceable as far as men would let him be. He had a stormy encounter with Grandison, bishop of Exeter, who barred the gates of his cathedral against the Archbishop's visitation. Government interfered and bade Mepeham desist, but this was the single instance in which king and primate clashed. Simon died in 1333, when the reign of Edward III. was only beginning. The evils, which had been fostered under the previous reign by the bad example set in high places, and the unusual spectacle of a king and queen equally depraved, seemed to recede into the background. It was not till success deserted Edward and moral decline alone remained of his life's greatness and happiness that they were unmasked in their appalling reality. The king's best energies were devoted to an inane war with France, which emptied his treasury and produced no single result for the real good of England.

Whilst the English were gaining useless laurels at Crecy and Poitiers, a measure of the gravest importance with regard to the Church was taken by the king and confirmed by parliament. Already during the previous reign, in 1309, the barons had complained to the Pope of "Provisions".[1] Since the concession of Magna Charta, a bishop was chosen by majority of suffrages or by compromise, for which election the chapter solicited a *congé d'élire*. Their

[1] See *Annales Londonienses, tempore Edwardi Secundi*, i. 157.

choice was notified to the metropolitan in case of a suffragan, or to the Pope in case of a metropolitan, and the subject was presented to the king for the royal approbation. By degrees the Pope exercised the right of institution, which had formerly belonged to the metropolitan, and thus through provisions nominated to a great number of bishoprics and English benefices generally. The Pope was then, as he is now, above local and personal influences which might sway electors in a far-off portion of the Church. His choice was often singularly wise, and productive of great blessing to England, but, it was objected, those he chose were not invariably English; by his intervention the rights of patronage were invaded, and the gold of the Church in England was occasionally used to profit the enemies of England. In 1350, therefore, the king "enacted a severe penal law against all who in any way should take part in the filling up of Church offices injuriously to his royal rights or to those of the chapters or private patrons concerned". Every act of this kind was declared null and void; all offenders in this sort were threatened with fines and imprisonment; and all appeals against the same to foreign tribunals prohibited. This was the "Statute of Provisions," which was followed three years later by another penal act, commonly called simply the *Præmunire*.[1]

The *Præmunire* gave to the king what it took from the Pope, and forestalled in a faint degree the cele-

[1] Lechler, *Life of Wycliffe*, i. 71.

brated act of Parliament which transferred the Papal Supremacy to the person of the sovereign. As on many other points it was a choice between king and Pope. A legislation, which strengthened the royal hand in a spiritual matter, could not work otherwise than disastrously, and so the clergy found. *Præmunire* was an encroachment of the royal authority, and by no means guaranteed either free elections or deserving nominees. The Pope on his side ignored the Statute, whenever the good of the Church required it, that is, he still annulled elections, and presented to sees, in the case of unsuitable nominations. Edward III. outlived his greatness and his happiness. His ambitious designs upon France and Scotland proved fallacious: both his noble queen, Philippa, and the Black Prince predeceased him, and he himself fell into unworthy hands. Before these melancholy last years, the terrible Black Death appeared in England (1348).

The dissoluteness of society had reached an appalling height, and the historian searches in vain on the prominent page of history for the ten just men who might have saved England from civil war and apostasy. Yet the saints were there, unseen by men, well known to God. In the heart of this century, so stirring, so full of an old power in a new form, the worldliness proper to those who live in an age of transition, a certain number of English maidens were leading the austere life of anchoresses. One, in particular, who is hardly even a name to many,

wrote in 1370, when she was thirty years old, a book which is to English piety very much what St. Catherine of Siena's works were to her Italian contemporaries. In Norwich, the second town of England in mediæval times, with its 60,000 inhabitants, dwelt in the latter twenty years of Edward III. Juliana the Anchoress. An author[1] has well said that she and her sisters set forth in their lives and whole being the distinguishing mark of English piety, a tender love for our Lord. The home of the anchoress, that is, the cell in which she passed her days, was attached to the church. From its narrow window she looked upon the altar over which, in mediæval times, the Blessed Sacrament was reserved; and so her heart, free from earthly ties, fed upon Him alone. There was this essential difference between the hermit and the anchorite, that the one retired to solitary places away from the crowd, and that the other became a solitary amidst the abodes of men. The hermit lived very often in the woods: the anchorite attached himself to the tabernacle of the living God. In Juliana's time the murmur of the busy world reached her cell attached to the church of St. Carrow.

The monetary struggles of Edward III. had a deep echo at Norwich, as the great seat of the woollen manufactures, which produced no inconsiderable part of his revenues. Two questions, each containing the germ of revolution, were agitating men: the rebellion of labour against property, and

[1] Fr. Dalgairns in Preface to Walter Hilton's *Scale of Perfection.*

the conversion of serfs into free manufacturers. The lower orders were gradually rising, whilst the higher were becoming more enervated by the civilisation which brought them increasing luxury. Later on, Norwich took a prominent part in the peasant's rising under Wat Tyler, but the thing to be remembered with gladness is that, "amidst decaying chivalry and chaotic revolt, the Saints of God were suffering". They are almost hidden in the fourteenth century, yet the existence of the Anchoresses as a body is a guarantee that a supernatural life of prayer was carried on through its dark days. Souls of the stamp of Juliana prayed, and Jane the Meatless lived almost entirely on the Blessed Sacrament alone.[1]

These were the Saints. Of English women generally a contemporary wrote that it was the exception when they observed their marriage vow.[2] In their lives they had abjured Christian purity for a licentiousness more akin to Mahomet's sensual code. The wars of Edward III. had driven men on outward things when it most behoved them to enter into their own hearts, and set an earnest hand to their moral reformation. As one by one Edward's conquests fell from his grasp, the inner mind of his people revealed itself in all its nakedness. The visitation of 1348 is said to have carried off half the population of England. Life came to a standstill. Law courts

[1] See Preface to *The Scale of Perfection* (W. Hilton), p. 27.

[2] *Chronica Monasterii de Melsa*, t. iii.

and fields were alike deserted. The harvest, ripe and abundant that year, rotted on the ground for want of labourers. The whole occupation of the living was the burying of the dead, and for that, so great was the mortality, they did not suffice. The statistics which have reached us may be taken as a sample of what was going on all over England. In the plague burial ground near the Charterhouse "50,000 bodies were interred during twelve months. From Candlemas to Easter 200 interments are said to have taken place each day." [1]

The scourge fell most heavily on the Church. It swept away two-thirds of the clergy, and decimated religious houses to so great an extent, that they had not recovered either their numbers or their spiritual tone at the Dissolution. One result of the Plague was to depreciate land and to raise the price of labour. The wages of labourers rose fifty per cent. in consequence of the terrible visitation.[2] The monasteries ceased to be landlords on a large scale, and the system of small land holdings was introduced. "After the funerals of the laity," says a chronicler, "the officiating priests themselves were consumed by the plague." [3] Norwich suffered very heavily. During one year 863 livings of the diocese fell vacant through the plague. This resulted in the appoint-

[1] Gasquet, *Henry VIII. and the English Monasteries*, i. 4.

[2] T. Thorold Rogers, *History of Agriculture and of Prices*, i. 292.

[3] *Chronica de Melsa*, iii.

ment of youths who had purposed to be *clerks*, but were not competent to be parish priests. Clement VI. granted a Bull to the Bishop of Norwich, allowing him to dispense with sixty clerks who were only twenty-one years of age.[1] Sometimes the newly ordained had not even been clerics. Many who had lost their wives in the plague, though they could hardly read, much less understand, the liturgy, were admitted into Holy Orders. This necessity is explained by the fact that the parish churches were for the most part deserted, and that there was literally no one to distribute spiritual food to the people. At Oxford the schools were shut, and the scholars dispersed themselves, or succumbed to the plague.[2] A second visitation occurred in 1361. It was called the lesser plague, yet it swept away vast numbers, and seven bishops amongst others. In 1368 it reappeared for the third time, and again in 1370, 1381, and 1382. What wonder is it that the fatal scythe of the Black Death produced a "universal loosening of the bonds of society"?[3] Yet it was only a sensible image of what had gone before—the loosening of morals, which had been as a plague to so many souls.

William of Wykeham, bishop of Winchester in 1366, had grown rich by royal favour, which he forfeited in the latter years of Edward. Considering the ravages produced in the ranks of the clergy by

[1] Gasquet, i. 2.

[2] *Life of William of Wykeham*, Lowth, p. 94.

[3] Gasquet, i. 4.

the plague, he deemed that he could not make a better use of his wealth than to devote it to the needs of poor scholars aspiring to the priesthood. To this end he founded a grammar school at Winchester, which was to be a sort of nursery to a college at Oxford (1373). His whole scheme was to provide for the perpetual maintenance and instruction of two hundred poor scholars. The grammar school at Winchester was to prepare the way for Oxford, that is to say, each foundation was to complete the other. Henry VI. alone followed in the footsteps of Wykeham, and copied his design in his royal foundations of Eton and Cambridge.[1]

Already, however, a stronger dissolving element than the Black Death was in the field. With the gathering shadows Edward III. breathed his last on 21st June, 1377. The policy of the Edwards ended with him.

[1] Lowth, *Life of Wykeham*, p. 182.

CHAPTER VIII.

SCHISM, HERESY, AND INSURRECTION (1377-1399).

THE presence of the man who, in England, cast the first stone at the principle of authority, signified indeed a worse dissolution than that of the Black Death; but before considering Wycliffe in detail, it will be well to review what was taking place in the citadel of authority itself, for that will explain how the English Luther found his tools, so to say, to his hand. The appearance of heresy in a country, its acceptance or rejection by the people, are not isolated facts, and should be judged in their context, as phenomena in the history of Christendom. The fortunes of the Holy See are reflected on the period, and throw a blaze of light upon all the upheavings, social and religious, of the fourteenth century. Thus, the advent of Wycliffe and the beginning of the Papal Schism, the most terrible affliction which God has ever allowed the gates of hell to visit upon His Church, will be found to be almost contemporary events. There is a very close connection between the two, since the basis of authority attacked by Wycliffe was at that moment weakened in the eyes of men by a divided Papacy.

The Avignon residence and tradition were founded in 1305 by Clement V., a Gascon Pope, who thought peace and the bounty of the king of France preferable to Italy torn by factions. Outward peace has rarely been the lot of the Papacy, and when the Popes ensured it to a certain extent on the banks of the Rhone, they paid a heavy price for their security. Subservience to the King of France was an evil which grew naturally out of their position, yet, excepting Clement V., who is said to have submitted his Bull concerning the Templars to Philippe le Bel,[1] they were personally more independent than it. The nations of Christendom were too apt to assume that the Popes of Avignon were French subjects, and in the political activity ascribed to them, to forget the more solid benefits of their spiritual administration. England, for instance, as the sworn enemy of France, looked at the French Pope with the eyes of her national hatred. Their false position was their gravest fault, and at any other time, and in the normal course of things, the Popes of Avignon would have made their mark on the Church.

Clement V. and Clement VI. (1342), in a mistaken policy, strengthened the bonds of the French captivity, whilst John XXII. laid the foundations of the Papal palace and fortress at Avignon. The abode of Clement V. had been in the Dominican Convent. Benedict XII. and Innocent VI. saw the double necessity of reformation in the Catholic sense, and of

[1] Pastor, *Geschichte der Päpste*, Erster Band, p. 55.

returning to Rome. Each day increased the difficulties, and made the French Popes more alive to the turbulent spirit of the Romans. Innocent VI. took a serious step Romewards by sending Cardinal Albornoz to Italy, in the capacity of his vicegerent. As to material resources, the Pope had been in the position of an absent landlord with no rent collector. Whilst Dante and Petrarca were imploring him to return to his city, he was living on his spiritual position as the Head of Christendom. From England he had contributions under the headings of (1) Peter's Pence, (2) of the annual tribute promised by King John, (3) of Annates or first fruits, (4) of Provisions. He employed agents in England to collect these several monies, and, doubtless, other countries helped to support their common Father, though we hear less about it, and England seems to have made the obligation of sending good English gold out of the kingdom, a great grievance. The feeling first becomes prominent after the conquest, and grows in intensity. Certain it is that money is at the root of most family quarrels, and it would seem not otherwise with nations. The Popes of Avignon had an expensive court to keep up, and it is said the two Clements made it unnecessarily so in their love of pomp and representation. Their Italian rents failed them, and the powers of Christendom were slow and irregular in payments which they feared would fall into the coffers of France. To meet the embarrassments of their position, which was radically false, John

XXII. and Clement VI. organised a system of percentage on Annates and Provisions.

I say a system because the custom was by no means new, as we have seen in England. In their material necessity these Popes of Avignon gave the force of a tax to what had been more or less usual and voluntary, sacrificing thereby some of their *prestige* and laying themselves open to the attacks which assailed all authority in the fourteenth century.[1] What our greatest historian of the Papacy has called the finance system of Avignon went far to nullify the spiritual administration of really good and able men, and to open the way both to the Papal schism and to Luther. The Curia, nevertheless, was straightforward and honest. It was the custom "to grant a monopoly of office by purchase, a fashion which lingered with us in the buying and selling of army commissions. But it does not seem that the court was oppressive or dishonest." The system of bribery, which was so common in English law courts, did not exist.[2]

The disastrous nature of the tradition which bound the Papacy to France was exemplified in Urban V. Petrarca said of him that he would have been reckoned amongst the world's most famous men if he had ordered himself to be carried before the altar at St. Peter's to breathe his last. In 1370 he did indeed

[1] See Pastor, *Geschichte der Päpste*, Erster Band, p. 65.

[2] Rogers, *History of Agriculture and of Prices in England*, i. 138.

return to Rome, but Pope though he was, he was foreign to the place, and unequal to cope with the reigning disorder. The banks of the Rhone invincibly attracted him and most of his cardinals. He was warned of schism and of his own approaching end if he returned to Avignon, yet could not be induced to remain in Rome. His successor, Gregory XI., yielded to the burning advice of St. Catherine of Siena, and finally left Avignon in 1376. She reproached him with too great a love for his own kindred, and it is probable that nothing short of the influence of her holiness would have broken the chains which riveted him to France. He, too, went to Rome as a stranger, not even knowing its language. The Roman climate tried him and hastened his end (1378), and yet the sacrifice came too late. That year has an ominous celebrity as the first of the great schism.

The good intentions of the new Pope, Urban VI., were frustrated by his harshness and want of tact. He wished before all things to set his hand to the work of reformation. His proceeding clearly shows the necessity of manner as well as matter. Neither piety nor goodness are produced by military commands. Far otherwise is the dealing of the Divine Spouse, *Who stands at the door and knocks.* If Urban had been more mindful of gentleness, he might have accomplished his desire. His mode of proceeding made Charles V. of France, who desired a return to Avignon, his enemy. It was evi-

dent to Charles that if Urban succeeded in creating a majority of Italian cardinals, he would restore the Church to her independence. Under these circumstances, Charles V. did not hesitate to goad on to extreme measures the thirteen cardinals, who were discontented both with Pope Urban's roughness and with his uprightness. They proclaimed Robert of Geneva under the title of Clement VII. as the true Pope, impugning the validity of Urban's election. "I have understood," wrote St. Catherine of Siena to Pope Urban, "that those devils in human form have made an election. They have chosen not a vicar of Christ, but an anti-christ."[1] What would St. Catherine have said if she could have foreseen that the reign of anti-christ was to last for nearly forty years and to be the real cause of so deeply wounding Christendom? England never swerved in its allegiance to the true Pope. For once the national feeling helped our country to a right conclusion. "In the length and breadth of England opposition to Clement was identified with war against France."[2]

At the death of Urban VI., in 1389, it became clearer that the schism was to be perpetuated. There had been anti-popes before, usually the tool, first of a German emperor, afterwards of a French king, who had set him up. Never before had an anti-pope owed his election to the electors proper,

[1] Pastor, i. 204.

[2] *Ibid.*, i. 107.

that is, to the Sacred College. But the rightful Pope, Urban VI., was succeeded by Boniface IX.

The disputed authority of the Holy See had a similar influence on the lower orders of the hierarchy as well as on kingdoms. In some places there were two bishops. In Bohemia, John Huss and Jerome of Prague were undermining government and order by their socialist heresy, also a consequence of the papal schism; and the errors, social and religious, then current at Prague were propagated in England through Richard the Second's marriage with Anne of Bohemia. To Wycliffe, however, is due the ignoble primacy of being first in the field. The Bohemian disturbers of peace and order followed him. It will be seen that the times were singularly powerless to resist attacks of the kind, and that the grave sickness of the head had affected all the members of the body.

The crisis of the schism occurred under the pontificate of Gregory XII. (1406). The University of Paris proposed an appeal to a general council, or the shorter and better way of a voluntary abdication of both Gregory and Peter de Luna, known by his party as Benedict XIII. Again the Cardinals turned the remedy into poison. Apart from either papal obedience, they called together the revolutionary conventicle of Pisa (1409), and increased existing troubles and perplexities by the election of a third Pope, who took the name of Felix V. He died the following year, and the Cardinals lost no time in giving him a successor. The election of John XXIII. was the

most disastrous event of the schism. To the evil of further loss of unity the Cardinals added that of a bad choice.

Gregory XII. had ascended the papal throne full of zeal to put an end to a divided Christendom. His ardour cooled considerably when he became Pope, yet it revived in his latter years, and it is mainly owing to his generosity that the schism ended when it did. The Council of Constance might have found it difficult to deal with a true Pope as obstinate as Peter de Luna. Thus, whilst neither anti-pope would make the slightest sacrifice for the Church, Gregory smoothed the way of the Council by resigning the Papacy. This act of his showed that the principle of government rests not in the general council, but in the person of Peter. No council could have unmade a Pope, who was not himself willing to be deposed.

The schism ended in 1417 with the election of Martin V. The consequences of those disastrous thirty-nine years were more lasting. Contemporary events in the Church during their course were seriously affected by the want of stability, beginning in the head and extending to all the members. Attacks on authority could not have been made at a more opportune moment for the powers of darkness. For this reason it would be impossible to judge of Wycliffe without considering the general state of Christendom in his day.

In England, moreover, the sceptre had now passed

into the weak hands of Richard of Bordeaux, a boy of eleven, at his grandfather's death (1377). He reaped what Edward III. had sown, years of moral famine after the superficial brilliancy of the French wars, which emptied the treasury to no solidly good purpose. Wycliffe sowed even more destructive seed. The stone, which he cast at authority, fell back upon the State, unsettled the succession, and ultimately caused the Wars of the Roses. These, in their turn, shook the power of the nobility, and prepared the Tudor tyranny, or rather made it possible.

Wycliffe was born about 1324, at Wycliffe, in Yorkshire, from which place he took his name. His career of invective opened as early as 1360 with violent abuse of the Mendicant Orders, whom he accused of setting up their rule against the Gospel, of accumulating money, and of interfering with the parish priest. A few years later his reproaches were directed against the Pope.[1] Already his chief weapon of destruction was forged: sin disqualifies for power. He held that, if the Pope was a sinner, he could lay no claim to authority over other men. But such a theory was destructive of all government on earth.

It is almost a commonplace to say that no man loves power so much as the patriot and the disinterested radical. The Archbishop of Canterbury, Simon Islep, founded Canterbury Hall at Oxford in 1361 in order to promote education and to make up

[1] Vaughan, *Life of Wycliffe*, p. 33.

for some of the ravages caused among the clergy by the Black Death. At first he contemplated a foundation partly secular, partly regular; but had reason to alter his mind in favour of the secular clergy, and in 1365 appointed "his dear son, Master John de Wycliffe, warden of the new hall" at his own pleasure, that is, he retained a founder's right to maintain or remove the governing officers. This is plain from the statutes of the hall drawn up by Archbishop Islep.[1] He died soon afterwards, and bequeathed his founder's right to his successor, Archbishop Langham. The new Archbishop, who had been Chancellor of England, brought judicial knowledge and wisdom to his post. He resolved to alter the secular character of Canterbury Hall for the benefit of his Christchurch Monks, and he nominated one of their number, Henry de Wodhull, to be warden. Wycliffe refused to retire, maintaining that he had been elected for life, and the matter was consequently taken to the Holy See. It was given in favour of the Archbishop. Wycliffe and his adherents were ordered to withdraw. The judge insisted that the sentence should be duly carried out, and threatened excommunication in case of resistance. Wycliffe's friends or supporters deserted him in this hour of humiliation, and made him find Oxford undesirable as an abode. About the same time (1367) his secret hopes were defeated in another direction. He aspired to become bishop of Worcester, but the

[1] *The Truth about John Wycliffe*, Stevenson, p. 13.

loss of *prestige* entailed by his discreditable suit with the Archbishop of Canterbury was no recommendation to any cathedral chapter. He was passed over, and, say contemporaries, he vented his disappointment in abuse of Church endowments and ecclesiastical authority.[1]

Another light on his subsequent career is thrown by the next office he took. He became, according to his own expression, *peculiaris regis clericus*, a post for which he was eminently qualified. He laid his ecclesiastical learning and training at the king's feet for the treatment of "cases where the Crown expected to come into collision with the Church".[2] This occurred in 1366, when the Parliament met in no good humour to consider the arrears of John's tribute to the Holy See, which was now claimed by Urban V. The English people had no wish to pay, and Wycliffe, as the "peculiar clerk," furnished them, it would seem, with reasons why they should *not* pay.

In consequence of this anomalous but lucrative position at Court, Wycliffe was appointed in 1374 a Royal Commissioner "to treat with certain Papal Nuncios who were expected to arrive at Bruges during the course of the summer". His work was again to supply arguments against the Papal claims.[3]

It was probably at Bruges that Wycliffe and John

[1] *The Truth about John Wycliffe*, p. 26.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 32. [3] *Ibid.*, p. 52.

of Gaunt became acquainted. The prince headed the Liberal party, and always afterwards befriended Wycliffe; yet when Wycliffe's theories were carried out by the mob, they fell most severely on John of Lancaster. In 1375 Edward III. presented his "peculiar clerk" to the living of Lutterworth. Pastoral duties filled a very small portion of Wycliffe's time at any period.

A few years later Wycliffe's negations had reached their climax. In 1377 he was summoned by Convocation to St. Paul's to clear himself from the formal charge of heresy. He appeared before Courtney, Bishop of London, supported by John of Gaunt and Lord Henry Percy. John of Gaunt insulted the bishop, and provoked the people's anger. The matter in hand was passed over in angry personal altercations, and Wycliffe, with his powerful protectors, retired untouched. His name, however, had long been before the Holy See, and the nature of his attack was exposed by Gregory XI. in a Bull to the Archbishop of Canterbury, at that time the unfortunate Simon Sudbury, as "subversive of the Church and also of the secular power".[1] Proceedings were delayed by the death of Edward III. and the accession of Richard II., whose throne the son of Wycliffe's protector was in very truth to overturn. In the following year Wycliffe made his "Statement" to the Synod of Lambeth. Its pre-

[1] Bull of 31st May, 1377, quoted by M. Wallon, *Vie de Richard II.*, vol. i. Notes, p. 332.

amble is couched in ambiguous language. Confusing Papal infallibility with Papal impeccability, he attacks the power of St. Peter under pretext that perpetual political power is not from God. It is impossible to believe in the sincerity of the man who could gravely tell the world that the Pope was peccable. St. Catherine of Siena, his contemporary, had not feared to write to the Cardinals that if the Popes were "devils incarnate,"[1] they should still be treated with the reverence due to our Lord's vicars. Introduce the condition of impeccability into any government, and no earthly authority will stand, for that was in reality Wycliffe's standing-point: "The Pope is a sinful man, therefore he cannot command in God's name". But this "statement" gives no adequate notion of his negations, nor did it cover him with the public ignominy which was the heretic's lot in those days. He has been accused of not having the strength of his opinions. It was, in fact, the Pope who stayed proceedings till the matter could be thoroughly sifted. The slowness of the Roman court is proverbial, and to its ordinary prudence was now added the complication of the Schism.

Shortly afterwards, in the same year (1378), Wycliffe attacked the doctrine of Transubstantiation, the central dogma of the Christian Faith. His error, shifting and ambiguous, well represents the present mind of England, a fusion of consubstantiation with a certain transitory presence, which depends on the

[1] Pastor, i. 87.

dispositions of the believer, and is not inherent in the Sacrament. Yet Wycliffe went further than the present mind of England, for he did not believe in "dispositions". A cold and hard fatalism was at the bottom of his errors, and the most pernicious of all. A man's good or bad actions mattered not, for neither good deeds would save him who was predestined to eternal damnation, nor bad condemn the soul predestined to eternal happiness.

As he discarded man's free will, it is no wonder that he put out of his system both Sacrifice and Sacraments. Not one of the grace-giving Seven was left. Baptism "impressed no character and abolished no sin". Confirmation, its complement, was an idle form. Penance was powerless to remit sins which man committed whether he would or no. Matrimony, from a Christian sacrament, was changed into a gross material arrangement, in which indissolubility had no place. The need for Holy Orders, as the distinctive mark of a priesthood created for Sacrifice and Sacraments, had of course ceased to exist in so debased a system. Wycliffe substituted the "minister" for the priest, and to this end some kind of outward ceremony seemed called for; but it was not the exclusive privilege of the one sex. Women were allowed by him to say mass, and freely availed themselves of his licence. Jurisdiction follows in the wake of Orders. Wycliffe destroyed both at one blow, and let loose upon the country a set of itinerant preachers,

erroneously called "poor *priests*," who, under plea of being disestablished, were democrats of the darkest hue, the sworn enemies of existing powers.

Wycliffe has won golden opinions of Protestant posterity, because it sees in him the man who first put an English Bible into the people's hands. Wycliffe is, on the contrary, the father of unauthorised versions of the Scripture generally. His part in the work of translation amounted at best to the New Testament. What he really aimed at was the view which now obtains, that every man and woman may construct his religion out of the Bible without any appeal to the authority of the Church. A study of Bede will convince any inquirer that Catholics of his day were fully conversant with the leading facts of Scripture history, whilst the Saxon princes and princesses and nobles carried out the Gospel in their lives by frequently giving up their all for the pearl of great price. Venerable Bede died in the act of translating St. John. King Alfred's great desire was to put the whole Bible into Saxon for the benefit of his subjects, but long before his time the Psalms and Gospels had been translated into the vulgar tongue.[1] In the thirteenth century the Albigenses and Waldenses were claiming the right of examining Scripture for themselves, and Pope Innocent the Third raised his voice against any unauthorised version of the Holy Book, which inevitably produced as many opinions

[1] Stevenson, p. 105.

as there were readers. Truth is one. The portion of Scripture prepared by the Church for the daily use of her children is contained in the Missal. Now it is the one Roman Missal, excepting the slight variations of particular calendars. Then it was the Missal according to one of the English Uses, but always duly authorised. Wycliffe's attempt was restricted to the New Testament, and even that is not certain. He can claim novelty only in so far as he was the exponent of a heretical view, which disseminates an unauthorised translation, and then bids every man follow his own interpretation of it. The Council of Trent prohibited any such attempt by pronouncing anathema on its author.[1]

The theories of Wycliffe served to ignite the combustible matter which was contained in the Peasant Revolt. The Statute of Labourers had been enacted after the plague. A further ordinance sought to bind the labourer to the soil, to brand the runaway labourer, and to check the process of emancipation between the landowner and the villain. The Hundred Years' War was proceeding ignominiously for England in misfortune and defeat. Under these circumstances a subsidy could not fail to be unpopular. It took the obnoxious form of a Poll Tax levied on every person in the realm without distinction (1378). The poor man had to contribute as much as the rich, but it caused the full cup of peasant grievances to overflow. Three ringleaders of the

[1] *Canones et Decreta Concilii Tridentini, Sessio IV.*

people, bred on Wycliffism, started up, to give a practical rendering to his revolutionary tenets. John Ball, the heretical priest who had nourished his mind for twenty years on Wycliffite equality and carried out his master's *non serviam* by absolute insubordination to his ecclesiastical superiors, is a typical man. "Be no man's servants, pay no taxes to Church or State, you are as good as your neighbour," was the burden of his preaching. Crowds sat under him and followed him about whilst he delivered Wycliffe's message in season and out of season, until he was landed within the strong walls of the Archbishop of Canterbury's prison at Maidstone. The agitation, in which Jack Straw was the hero, began in Essex, but soon the Kentish men distinguished themselves by their wild fanaticism. The mob swelled to 100,000 as it marched towards London, proclaiming a reign of terror on its way. Assassination was the penalty for non-co-operation in its designs. Its strongly-marked feature was a hatred of law and everything connected with law.[1] Wat Tyler, who had a personal grievance in the Poll Tax because it had been roughly carried out in his house, was at the head of the Kentish men in the absence of John Ball. This ill-conditioned army of levellers made for the Tower, after burning down John of Gaunt's palace in the Savoy, and ruining the Temple as the headquarters of the law. Their object was to get possession of the king and to frighten their sovereign

[1] Stevenson, p. 65.

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of sixteen into compliance. Before encountering this angry army of democrats, the boy-king had sought out the ankret in Westminster Abbey, and confessed to him.[1] Richard's bodyguard of 1200 archers might have defended him in the fortress of the Tower. They struck not a blow; and the infuriated mob entered in and reeked their sacrilegious pleasure on the first subject of the realm, Archbishop Simon Sudbury, who with the king was under protection of sanctuary. The sovereign people resented the Archbishop's advice to the king not to trust himself in their hands, and now they intended to have their revenge. When Simon from his retreat in the chapel heard their yells getting louder and louder, he knew that his hour had come. He had already prepared himself for death by several days of meditation and retirement. His end was full of dignity and courage. He was seized and dragged to Tower Hill, being in the act of making his thanksgiving after Mass. There is no more striking image of hell than an infuriated mob. The yells which greeted the Archbishop's appearance were scarcely human. However, he attempted a remonstrance; he was a priest and an Archbishop, he said, and his murder would entail an interdict on the kingdom. They answered him with Wycliffe's words that "he was a sinner, therefore could be no true priest".[2] Then he prepared for death and for-

[1] Rock, *Church of our Fathers*, ii. 121.

[2] Stevenson, p. 72.

gave his executioner. It was only at the eighth blow that his head was severed from his body (June, 1381). The mutilated corpse lay exposed to any further indignities that might be offered to it during all that day. In the night a wretch found his way back to steal the episcopal ring from the stiffened finger.

Simon Sudbury was a martyr to Wycliffism. Atrocities followed in the wake of this brutal murder. Many were put to death not because they were "sinners" but for no reason at all. The triumphant career of the mob was checked by the king's bravery and by the death of the lawless Wat the Tyler, not, however, before confusion and destruction had been carried from Essex into Suffolk, Herts, Cambridgeshire, and Norfolk.

The end of the ringleaders was quite as instructive as that of the chief victim. Wat the Tyler had not had a chance of returning to his faith, as he fell by the Lord Mayor of London's sword. Jack Straw and John Ball were favoured with public executions, which helped them to know their friends, and to die Christian deaths. When all delusions had passed away, Jack Straw revealed the plot which Wycliffe had designed. The object of the peasants was to seize the king, make him their tool, and then to murder "the lords spiritual and temporal, the monks, canons and rectors of parishes". They would have dethroned Richard, and set up a king in every county.

John Ball's information in the same hour of extremity was no less pertinent. Before his execution he made a full confession to the effect that he had learned his revolutionary opinions from Wycliffe, and that there was a certain organised band of Wycliffites, who had agreed to go through the length and breadth of England, doing as he himself had done. He said that if energetic measures of repression were not taken, it would be too late in two years to stop the evil. Wycliffe was directing the whole plan from his comfortable vicarage at Lutterworth.[1]

In the following year, 1382, Wycliffe set a match to the fire which he had laid at Oxford, where he and his pantheistic theories were already well known. He had become a doctor of divinity in 1372, therefore *ipso facto* a professor; but there were cogent reasons against his exercising his privilege of doctorhood at that time. These did not exist in 1382, and he lectured in the schools belonging to the canons of St. Augustine. At the time of the Conquest the town of Oxford numbered 700 houses. In Wycliffe's day an university audience was no mean assembly of inquiring minds. During a great part of the Middle Ages Oxford was a place of schools rather than of colleges. At one period there were as many as 400 seminaries. Just before the plague the students numbered 30,000. That visitation thinned the ranks of "poor scholars," who, perhaps more than most classes, fell victims to its ravages. In 1387

[1] Stevenson, pp. 79 and 80.

Richard of Armagh informed the Pope that there were not then 6000.[1]

John of Gaunt, Wycliffe's friend and supporter, travelled to Oxford on purpose to beg him to keep to himself his views on the Holy Eucharist, but in vain. The Archbishop of Canterbury, at that time Courtney, the former bishop of London, who had already tried to deal with Wycliffe and his royal protector, interposed. "He had heard," he said, "that many unlicensed preachers were spreading heresies throughout his province," and he proceeded "to prohibit certain erroneous propositions within the University". They were ten in number. Three related to the Eucharist. One affirmed that, when a bishop or priest is in mortal sin, he can neither ordain, nor consecrate, nor baptise. The others taught that, if a penitent were truly contrite, confession is useless; that Christ did not appoint the Mass: that God should obey the devil; that if a Pope were a bad man, he has no power over faithful Christians, except (possibly) such power as he may have received from the State; that there should be no Pope after Urban the Sixth, but that every church should be governed by its own laws.[2]

On Friday after Pentecost in this same year 1382, when Wycliffe began openly to attack the most august mystery of our faith, a procession of clergy and laity was organised through London, in which

[1] Vaughan, *Life of Wycliffe*, p. 33. [2] Stevenson, p. 88.

all were to walk barefoot, according to the custom of the day when an act of penance was signified. After the procession, a Carmelite friar, Father Kynygham, preached the sermon, in which, obedient to the Archbishop's mandate, he exposed the heresies of Wycliffe, and denounced any who should favour them, as incurring excommunication. It chanced that an old knight was present, by name Cornelius Clonne, who had ardently embraced the new opinions. With regard to the Blessed Sacrament, in particular, he persisted in holding Wycliffe's view, that the substance of bread remained. On the following day, the eve of Trinity, Cornelius went to hear Mass at the Dominican convent in London. A young student was celebrating it. At the Elevation he looked up to gaze with unbelieving eyes on the lowly Host, and the thought "It is only bread" seems to have presented itself vividly to his mind. He looked again as the celebrant broke the sacred particle, and beheld with his "own eyes" real flesh, torn and bleeding, divided into three portions. He called his esquire, but the man's eyes were closed and he could not see. The third particle, which was to be put into the chalice, retained its former white appearance, but, in the middle of it, the Name of Jesus was distinctly written in letters of blood. It is not stated whether the celebrant witnessed this manifestation. He narrated it on the following day at St. Paul's Cross, where at the same time Cornelius proclaimed aloud his faith in Transubstan-

tiation. Had not God worked a miracle before the enlightened eyes of this new Cornelius? He, on his side, declared that he was ready to die for the adorable mystery.[1]

Wycliffe's career was now drawing to a close, and when he was at last summoned to appear before the Sovereign Pontiff, he could truthfully plead ill-health. Wycliffe profaned the Holy Sacrifice up to the end, and he was actually engaged in saying Mass on the feast of St. Thomas of Canterbury, December 29, 1384, when the fatal stroke of paralysis fell upon him. He never recovered the use of his speech, and expired on December 31.

Neither man, angel, nor devil can prevail against the Church, but Wycliffe's theories implanted lawlessness in the State, and undermined its authority. His "poor priests," who in his scheme were to put rich churchmen to shame, were priests only in name. The disciples were not better than the master, who had given up the fundamental idea of priesthood, that of the One Sacrifice. They were itinerant preachers without Orders or Jurisdiction, and they obeyed no man. They wore a dress, which was copied from the Mendicant Friars, of coarse serge, with a cord round their waist.

As early as the year 1382, the new opinions, as destructive to society, had been brought before Parliament. The Lollards were levellers both in Church

[1] Henrici Knyghton, *Can. Ley. Chronica*, ed. Twysden, lib. v. p. 2561.

and State. They recognised no authority. "No one could be master over another; no one, while in mortal sin, was either lawful" king, "bishop, or priest".[1] "It was stated" in Parliament "that many unlicensed persons were in the habit of itinerating from place to place and preaching heresy, not only in churches and churchyards, but also at markets and fairs, and in public places generally. The tendency of the discourses of these men was to sow discord between the different estates of the realm, and to cause disturbances among the people."

The Holy See did not lift up its voice till 1395, although the name of Wycliffe had been long before the Sovereign Pontiff. The schism told disastrously on the movement by hampering the free action of the Pope. It is certain that when Boniface IX. at last spoke, the English clergy were prompt to obey. He wrote to the king "that he has exhorted the whole episcopate to stand up in the power of God against this pestilent and contagious sect, and lively to persecute the same under the form of law". Richard was invited to strengthen the hand of magistrates and justices of assize.[2]

The young king's antecedents had not prepared him to act energetically on this advice. He had come face to face with the Peasant Revolt, a produce of Wycliffism, before he was well seated on the throne. Indeed, the question is, whether he ever *was* seated there. He had been a king as far as

[1] Stevenson, p. 135. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 137.

display went, with a court numbering at one time 10,000 retainers,[1] but he had never learned to reign.

His second marriage with Isabel of France somewhat strengthened his hand. In 1397 he accused several influential men in the kingdom of high treason, amongst others his own uncle, the Duke of Gloucester, and Thomas Arundel, Archbishop of Canterbury. The Metropolitan was sentenced to perpetual exile, and Richard's cousin, Henry Bolingbroke, the son of John of Gaunt, was likewise banished from the kingdom. Arundel favoured Henry's design upon his cousin's throne, and whilst Richard was absent in Ireland, they landed in England (1399) and carried it out. Richard's incompetency and deposition were acknowledged by Parliament, as well as Henry's claim.[2]

It was Henry's policy to support the Church, and during his reign it was the weapon he used to establish himself on the throne which he had usurped.

[1] Lowth, *Life of Wykeham*, p. 226.

[2] Hefele, *Concilien Geschichte*, vi. 843.

CHAPTER IX.

THE CHURCH UNDER THE HOUSE OF LANCASTER (1399-1461).

HENRY BOLINGBROKE was a strong man with a weak title, therefore he befriended the Church. He wanted the support of the spiritual power in order to consolidate his own. If he had been born Prince of Wales, he might have rendered exceptional services to England. King as he was, by the law of the stronger, he was undoubtedly able. Stern, daring, unscrupulous in the attainment of his ends, he was of his age and in harmony with it. He wore the crown, which had been the object of his ambition, for fourteen years, always in trepidation, never in weakness, and bequeathed it at last to a son, who knew its glories without its cares.

Henry IV. was crowned on St. Edward's day, 1399, by Archbishop Arundel, whom Richard II. had sentenced to perpetual exile. Before his coronation the new king declared his intentions with regard to the Church. He would not tax the clergy, nor accept subsidies unless the need were overwhelming; he would uphold the liberties of the Church and suppress heresy as far as he possibly could. The Arch-

bishop drew up a memorandum of ecclesiastical grievances, amongst which were complaints respecting the Pope's demands. The papal collector was accordingly invited to assist at the Synod of London then sitting.[1]

With some notable exceptions, his treatment of Archbishop Scrope, and his action with regard to the Alien Priories, Henry kept his word; indeed men of to-day will say that he kept it too well, because they have lost the perception of faith and heresy. Up to Wycliffe's time England was preserved from heresy, although other parts of Christendom had had to deal with it from the Apostles' days. The State which could allow murderers to be at large would soon be destroyed. The analogy applies not to the Church herself but to the souls of men, whom she has in her keeping. The heretic is guilty of high treason against her infallible authority. The Roman Inquisition took shape and consistency in the thirteenth century. The thing itself already existed, that is, a tribunal qualified to deal with the spiritual crime of high treason. In most cases instead of being general it was local, many instead of one. The Roman tribunal, now known as the Holy Office, took into its hands the work of the various episcopal courts, watched over the purity of the faith, and punished transgressors. Gregory IX. (1227-1241) entrusted it to the Dominican Order. Later on, when more than one Dominican administrator was accused of

[1] Hefele, *Concilien Geschichte*, vi. 843.

undue severity, other religious were at the head of it. In England the discipline, which existed prior to the institution of the Inquisition, was maintained: the bishop's court still dealt with the heretic.[1] So far only isolated instances had come before them. Now it was far different. The errors of Wycliffe impugned not only Sacrifice and Sacraments, but the very basis of all authority, and were therefore as dangerous to the State as to the Church. Socialism came in their train as infallibly as heresy. It is easy to see that a usurper of the royal authority would be far keener to discern and punish the enemies of his throne than a lawful Prince of Wales succeeding to his father's throne. This, added to his stronger natural character, is why Henry IV. enacted peremptory measures against Wycliffe's followers.

The celebrated Statute *Ex Officio* dates from the year 1401, but it was not generally applied till 1409, and even then practice was more forbearing than the letter of the law. This statute sanctioned capital punishment for heresy. It was in harmony with the legislation of those times, which considered the murderer of other men's souls deserving of death. There is a tendency now to do away with capital punishment altogether, and to regard physical pain and death as the worst evils. The ages of faith did not think as we do. The capital sentence in England was full of unnecessary barbarity; but in afflicting the body our forefathers probably had purgatory

[1] *Kirchenlexicon*, Artikel "Inquisition," vi. 766.

in view. They did not seek to soften the pangs of death for the criminal. On the contrary, they hoped an agony somewhat prolonged might help his soul through some of its necessary penance. It may be a stumbling-block to many people that so stern a legislation was built up on the convictions of faith, but the severe treatment of the body, in the criminal law as well as in the individual, may imply the highest charity towards the soul.

The middle ages legislated without humanity, yet not without charity: the world of to-day has not a spark of that faith which would slay a heretic because he was poisoning the fountain-head of truth and life for his fellow-man. The Church applied her criminal law with far greater moderation and forbearance than did the State. In comparing the numerous instances in history where men have been hurried out of life, or secretly put to death, on a lightly-made charge of high treason, with the painstaking process of ecclesiastical tribunals, carefulness and mercy, not, it is true, our sickly humanitarianism, will be found on the side of the Church. The first execution in England on account of religious belief, that is, for want of it, was in 1401. Sir William Sawtrey[1] had been a parish priest in the diocese of Norwich, and after the usual process of being cited before his ordinary, he had taken his oath to recant. Unfaithful to his solemn engagements, he was treated

[1] The prefix "Sir" was the old equivalent for "Reverend". *Paston Letters*, Introd., iii. 26.

as a lapsed heretic, degraded, condemned, and finally burnt at the stake.[1] Impenitent Wycliffism was no loving, soul-stirring cause which made men martyrs. As I have said, they eliminated Sacrifice and Sacraments, and the principle of authority, for they declared that no man in mortal sin could exact obedience from another. Sir William Sawtrey, and those of kindred mind, preferred to the eternal priesthood of the Bride the dubious rank of ministers without orders or jurisdiction, and finally bore out the Apostle's awful words by giving up their bodies to be burned, yet not having charity. Foxe asserts that these penal measures did not produce the desired effect, and that the Lollard seed fructified notwithstanding. It is certain that an unbroken succession of dissenters was kept up, but in all probability the real cause of these defections lies deeper. If the children of the Church, both clergy and laity, had set themselves to lead holy lives, the incipient heresy would have died out without any material fires. Archbishop Arundel, in sorrow at the Lollard blasphemies against the most Blessed Sacrament, said pertinently to Henry IV. that whilst the English had maintained in its integrity their faith in Transubstantiation, the royal throne had stood on a firmer basis.[2]

Henry never forgot, or was allowed to forget, on

[1] Stevenson, p. 132.

[2] *Chronica et Annales, Johannis de Trokelowe et Hen. de Blaneforde*, p. 395.

what uncertain a tenure he held that sceptre so dearly bought. The rising of the Percies in Yorkshire had for its object the restoration of the rightful heir, the Earl of March, grandson of Lionel, third son of Edward III. Richard Scrope, Archbishop of York, was a devoted follower of the Earl of March, and when questioned on the subject always proclaimed his rights, and the duty of dethroning Henry. The Archbishop was involved in the northern rising, though, as he protested, he had never sought to harm King Henry. Scrope maintained that the crown did not belong to Henry, and that he had perjured himself at Chester by swearing on the Blessed Sacrament that he would neither rebel nor be a party to Richard's deposition. Henry acted as if he had been a lawful despot instead of an usurper, whose title had been ratified by a too accommodating parliament. He sent orders to Sir William Gascoyne, then Chief Justiciary of England, to condemn the Archbishop as guilty of treason. "Neither you, my lord king, nor any liege man deputed by you, have it in your power by the laws of the realm to adjudge a bishop to death," was Gascoyne's uncompromising answer. Contrary to law and precedent Henry dispensed with a judicial sentence. A soldier, one William Fulthorp, was found to do his bidding, and pronounce sentence against Scrope in the Archbishop's court. It was carried out on June 8, 1405, the feast of St. William of York. The Archbishop prayed that his death might not be visited on the

king or his family, and then begged his executioner to inflict five wounds upon him for love of the five precious wounds of our Lord. According to a contemporary account, at the very time of the Archbishop's beheading, the king was seized with a terrible leprosy. He repented of his crime and sent ambassadors to the Pope to obtain absolution. The Holy Father, in grief at the hideous deed, finally consented to absolve the royal penitent on condition that he should build three monasteries of strict observance, and endow them so that the religious should be able to devote themselves in peace and quiet to God's service.[1]

The execution of Archbishop Scrope did not strengthen Henry's cause. Scrope had been deservedly popular, and now to a holy life was added the halo of a violent death borne with much meekness and fortitude. The popular voice proclaimed him a martyr. The wonder is that the new Lancastrian power ever survived the shock thus inflicted on the best feelings of the people. Henry had put himself into a thoroughly false position. If he had not the generosity to renounce the crown, he could not afford to have so powerful an enemy as an Archbishop of York.

Amongst the Archbishop's articles of complaint against Henry is mentioned the king's claim of a tenth during the year following his coronation. He

[1] *Clemens Maydestone, de Martyrio Ricardi Scrope*, Anglia Sacra, v. ii. p. 370.

had another device for raising the necessary subsidy, and this was furnished by the Alien Priories. He had begun his reign by restoring thirty-three of them, reserving the revenues they paid to their foreign abbeys in time of peace for his own wars. Twice, at least, Henry's parliaments broached the question of supplying the royal revenue from Church property, which constituted a third part of the land of England. Both in 1402 and 1405, Archbishop Arundel staunchly resisted the demand, and Henry declared that nothing should induce him to touch the goods of the Church. He should have added *in England*, for he had shown that he viewed otherwise the said goods abroad. Later on, in 1408, he had altered his mind even with regard to England, or perhaps his need was too pressing. He then took all the revenues of Alien Priories, and the income of vacant bishoprics and abbeys for his household expenses.[1] Henry V. went a step further. On the pretext that money was drained out of England by these foreign cells, he finally dissolved the Alien Priories, 140 in number, and vested their estates in the Crown. Their property was usually spent on educational and religious foundations at the pleasure of the king. It was an aggressive act, although the House of Lancaster made a good use of the money thus gained. The foundations of William of Wykeham and Bishop Waynfleet profited by the dissolved priories, to the loss of the foreign brethren. The

[1] Gasquet, v. i. p. 51.

Priory of St. Evroul in Normandy drew as much as £2000 a year from England, and naturally protested at its withdrawal. Henry V. had conferred these revenues on the Carthusians at Sheen, for which acts of conversion he had, it seems, the sanction of Pope Martin V. The St. Evroul Benedictines, with others, appealed in vain.

In 1400 Parliament protested against exemption from tithe, which exemption religious had been in the habit of obtaining from Rome. It was enacted that any one procuring such bulls of exemption would be subjected to the penalty of *Præmunire*, that is, forfeiture of goods to the king, and imprisonment at his pleasure.[1]

The first Lancastrian king was dead when unity was restored to the Church by the election of Martin V. (1417). The new Pope was a man of blameless life, and admirable as far as external and judicial reformation went. His able administration silenced the enemies of order, and retarded for a time the open revolt of those unfaithful Catholics who were to make good Protestants; only for a time because his plan of operation did not reach the inner life, which was so faint and languid. "Things were so entangled that any radical change would have amounted to a revolution."[2] Something more than legislation was wanted, and that was the holiness of saints. There are periods in history which require

[1] Gasquet, v. i. p. 54.

[2] Pastor, *Geschichte der Päpste*, i. p. 164.

the action of saints, and then God sends them. It is doubtful whether the Council of Trent could have effected its end by decrees if Ignatius, Francis Xavier, Philip Neri, Teresa, and kindred spirits, who were consumed by love for God, had not done His work in human minds and hearts.

With regard to England, Pope Martin V. protested strongly against the "execrable" Statute of *Præmunire*. He had witnessed the evils of the national element in the Church, as set forth at Avignon, and the greater evils of a divided Christendom, therefore when he sat on the Chair of St. Peter, his effort was to make the Church in all lands more dependent on the one Head, to the weakening of local authorities and interests. The protest against anything approaching to a national Church was surely worthy of the Holy See. That an Archbishop of Canterbury did not rise to this elevated view, and preferred to be, as it were, an independent sun instead of a satellite—to put an impossible hypothesis—is perfectly comprehensible. It was the natural temptation of so great a man as the English Primate, and one which came with very particular force to Archbishop Chicheley, who was the intimate friend, and as we should say, Premier, of the most popular of English kings. Henry Chicheley had been a Wykehamist scholar at Winchester. From his father's rank of tradesman he had raised himself by his own talents to be Archbishop of Canterbury, as successor to Arundel, and was translated

from St. David's in 1414. A great deal of personal piety did not save Chicheley from being an Erastian, and from rendering to Cæsar that which he should have rendered to God. The clergy (1390), the universities (1390), and lastly the House of Commons (1416), successively petitioned the Throne to repeal the Statutes of Provisors and *Præmunire*, which were directly contrary to the Pope's right as chief shepherd. The king had stepped into his place, and aimed at holding the nomination to benefices exclusively in his own hands. It was an attempt to supersede the Papal, by the royal, power, and not even a successful attempt, as far as results were concerned. The universities attested that when the Pope had granted provisions he had made it his care to appoint university men. Since his action had been restricted, small regard was paid by patrons to the necessary qualifications, hence studies languished. The Lancastrian kings had added a new care to the already heavy responsibility of royalty, that of a false position. At any moment, if they relaxed their watchfulness, or became unpopular, the Earl of March might have urged his prior claim to the throne. Foreign war was therefore their policy. Henry IV. bequeathed it to his son, the young and gifted king, who, with a true title, would have utilised his energies far more worthily at home. His insane pretensions to the French throne, his extraordinary fortune in upholding them, by covering him with honour and glory, fortified his

dynasty, and made the long regency of his infant son possible, to the undoing of England. The warning words of the Pope, whether addressed to the king, whose heart was set upon a chimerical conquest, or to the Archbishop of Canterbury, Henry's trusted counsellor, fell upon deaf ears. "Labour therefore with all your might," he wrote to Chicheley, "that the execrable statute against the liberty of the Church be repealed, and neither observe it yourself nor let it be observed by others. . . . This, if you neglect to do, no declaration of your good will to us and the Holy See will be of avail." [1]

Chicheley temporised. The favourable opportunity passed away. Henry V., who was in France, and heart and soul in its conquest, put off the Pope by saying he would consider the matter on his return to England. He never did return. He left his sceptre in the hands of a baby, and its responsibilities in a Council of Regency. It was not till 1428 that Chicheley at last obeyed the Pope's injunctions, and publicly invited a deputation from the Commons to abrogate the *Præmunire* Statutes. He pointed out the Pope's right to make "provisions," but nothing seems to have come of his tardy protest. Half-hearted as it was, there is some appearance that it was prompted by a human motive. Henry Beaufort, Bishop of Winchester, was a natural son of John of Gaunt, and therefore uncle to Henry V. In 1418 Martin V. nominated him a cardinal, and it

[1] Hook, *Lives of Archbishops*, p. 92.

was further rumoured that he was to be *legatus a latere* for life. Both measures were strongly opposed by Chicheley, and not carried out during the lifetime of Henry V., who forbade his uncle to accept the Pope's offer. The official recognition of Beaufort's double elevation was delayed till 1426.[1] The Cardinal was at the head of the Papal party, and a staunch defender of Papal privileges.

In virtue of his office, the Archbishop of Canterbury was *legatus natus* of the Holy See, but Martin V. deprived him of his legatine faculties on account of his wavering obedience. Kemp, Archbishop of York, was likewise a cardinal, so that both he and Cardinal Beaufort took precedence of the Archbishop of Canterbury. That Chicheley felt the reproof is evident from a letter which he wrote to the king as soon as he was informed of Beaufort's rumoured elevation. It is not surprising that he was jealous of another's exercising legatine functions in his own place. On the other hand, Pope Martin's step was fully justified by Chicheley's previous conduct. The Archbishop's non-compliance in the matter of *Præmunire* had been only part of a policy distinctly erastian and anti-Papal. He had taken advantage of the schism in Rome to annul all Papal immunities and exemptions in England, or rather in the province

[1] Hook gives two different dates for Beaufort's nomination to the cardinalate, one in 1418, the other in 1426. The first was probably an *in petto* nomination, impeded by Henry V.'s opposition.

of Canterbury. He had seen the revenues of the Alien Priories confiscated and vested in the king without uttering a protest. On the contrary, he had himself purchased some of their properties, to the value of £10,000, for the foundation of All Souls' College, Oxford. He applied them to a good purpose, for he was both charitable and munificent. At that time the secular clergy were coming into prominence for the work of education, and Chicheley's foundation gave impetus to the movement. So far from condemning the spirit of *Præmunire* in its various expressions, the Archbishop sanctioned the order in Council which prohibited the preferment in England of any foreigner to an ecclesiastical benefice until he had first made oath that he would never divulge the secrets of the Government.[1]

Chicheley was an Englishman first, and a Catholic afterwards, and in this respect the Prime Minister went beyond the king. Henry the Fifth's spirit of faith and personal piety would have left their impress on his reign if he had not passed too rapidly away, and been absorbed during his brief eight years with an inane and impossible dream of conquest. Boniface IX. had specially charged Henry IV. to remember the soul of Richard II., as an atonement for having caused his dethronement and death. Henry V. was mindful of this legacy. He founded in 1414 Sion House of the Bridgettine Order, and the Carthusian House of Sheen. The king brought

[1] Hook, *Lives of Archbishops*, p. 68.

his influence to bear upon Sir John Oldcastle, also called Lord Cobham. This famous Lollard leader was not contented with holding heretical opinions: he wanted to carry them out, for a Wycliffite's righteous indignation against those in authority, in whatever grade of aristocracy, always tended to self-aggrandisement. Patriotism meets socialism halfway. Sir John was what is falsely called a patriot, and greatly affected by grievances both in Church and State, which he was quite ready to remove by violent measures. In vain the king argued with him: he clung to his opinions, and propagated them by maintaining heterodox preachers in different parts of the kingdom. He was at length imprisoned, but escaped, and put himself at the head of his party against the Government. This Lollard rising was suppressed by Henry in person, and the ringleaders were taken and executed. According to the Wycliffite theory, which indulged freely in rash judgment, Henry was in mortal sin, and therefore had no claim to his subjects' allegiance. If the Lollards had carried out their intentions on this occasion, they would have put the king and his brothers to death, overthrown the constitution, and levelled with the ground every church and monastery. Then Oldcastle was to have been appointed regent.[1] His career was cut short by execution (1417). He is claimed by the Lollards and their Protestant successors as a martyr. His opinions made him a dan-

[1] Stevenson, p. 135.

gerous agitator, and would have allowed the country no rest. Every enemy of order and the existing state of things was his friend.

What is true of Sir John Oldcastle may be said of the Lollards as a body. They were ready to agitate, and only remained quiet because they could not help themselves. Sawtrey had followers in priests, who were unfaithful to their vows, and then had "intellectual difficulties". In the early years of Henry VI. a certain William White, a priest and a Wycliffite, carried on in Norfolk an active propaganda of his master's opinions. He was "converted" in the usual way to pure Gospel truth, but Wycliffe's particular views about matrimony facilitated matters for those who felt, as White did, that they had not the gift of chastity. The sacrament of marriage had shared the fate of all the seven, and disappeared from the Wycliffite code. White, then, could afford to trample on the canons, and to live in sin with a young woman, who, according to those canons embodied in the law of the land, could never be his wife. This was the man who accused the Pope of "wicked living," the Church of being the barren fig-tree, and the clergy as the "lance knights and soldiers of Lucifer". Vituperation took the place of creed and dogma. White fell into the hands of the Archbishop of Canterbury in 1424, and recanted for a time. Finally, however, he was brought before the Bishop of Norwich, and, persevering in his errors, was burnt in 1428.[1]

[1] Stevenson, p. 146.

Wycliffe himself always maintained a certain veneration for our Lady, though his views contained germs which were bound to lead to her dishonour. This was soon apparent in his descendants. White taught that "no honour is to be shown to the Crucifix, nor to the image of any saint or of our Lady". His own life showed that the Wycliffites had destroyed as far as might be the ideal of holiness, and placed a wretched counterfeit before the eyes of men. "One Margaret Wright confessed that, if any saints were to be prayed to, she would rather pray to him (White) than any other."[1] Another Lollard woman declared that the same William White "is now a great saint in heaven; that he was a most holy doctor, ordained and sent by God; that she prayed daily to the same St. William White, . . . begging that he would vouchsafe to intercede with the God of Heaven".[2] These were the men whom the Lollards substituted for God's holy ones. It was the Communion of Saints perverted into the Communion of Sinners.

The Lollards were not confined to the Eastern counties. They penetrated into Scotland, which is a sufficient proof that they had spread more or less in the North. In 1431 a convocation of the Southern province dealt with the vicar of Maldon, Thomas Bagley, who was found guilty of heresy respecting the Holy Eucharist, prayers for the dead, vows, and pilgrimages. He said he would rather trust John

[1] Stevenson, p. 146. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 161.

Wycliffe than the great Latin Fathers, and that he was ready to die for his opinions.[1] He was degraded and burnt at Smithfield, but not until he had shown himself an obdurate heretic.

The bands of itinerant preachers, who scoured the country to preach what they called the "pure Gospel" without the leave or licence of any Ordinary, a proceeding unknown before Wycliffe, gave expression to a general, though vague, feeling of insecurity, which was pervading all classes. "Not a few in numerous monasteries in these days are affected by considerable instability," are the words of the St. Alban's chronicler, writing in the year 1454.[2]

Hitherto the bishops, though they are accused of inertness, had been preserved from the prevailing errors. Their orthodoxy was a guarantee that the holy sacrament of Orders, with the awful power it confers, would not be unworthily bestowed. However, one member of the English hierarchy fell undoubtedly into heresy, and was dealt with accordingly. It is not easy to explain the character of Reginald Pecock; but his seems to have been one of the rare cases of intellectual errors, pure and simple. He was born shortly after Wycliffe's death, and became first, Bishop of St. Asaph, and finally Bishop of Chichester. A man without prudence or judgment, he made enemies and alienated friends. From being

[1] Stevenson, p. 170.

[2] *Registrum Abbatiæ Johannis Whethamstede secundæ*, p. 147.

early in his career more papal than the Pope, he drifted into heretical opinions, which formed a sort of Lollardy of his own. He denied the descent of our Lord into hell, belief in the Holy Ghost, the Catholic Church, and the Communion of Saints,[1] as articles of faith; but he seems never to have adopted the sect's errors respecting Sacrifice and Sacraments. In 1457 he was brought before the Primate, then Archbishop Bouchier, on the formal charge of heresy. He submitted to a public recantation, and himself delivered to the flames eleven volumes of his works at St. Paul's Cross. As he watched them being consumed, he exclaimed: "My pride and presumption have brought upon me these troubles and reproaches". The sentence of the Court was confinement for life, and the place chosen was the Abbey of Thorney, in Cambridgeshire. To be allowed only to hear Mass, to be restricted to the Breviary, a Mass-book, a Psalter, a legend and a Bible,[2] and to have no writing materials, were part of the bishop's penance. Those ages of faith rigorously sacrificed the good of the individual to that of the multitude, and they preferred to condemn even a bishop who had recanted, to solitary confinement, rather than restore him to a liberty which might have endangered other souls.

The unclouded days of Henry VI. were drawing to a close when he made the royal foundations of Eton

[1] Wilkins, *Concilia*. See his *Retractation*, iii. p. 576.

[2] Stevenson, p. 178.

and Cambridge after the model of William of Wykeham's colleges at Winchester and Oxford. The gentle mind of Henry was perfectly qualified for a religious act which required much calculation and forethought. He spent some time at Winchester, in order to master the details of Wykeham's school. Lyndwood drew up the statutes, and, in 1441, Archbishop Stafford affixed the great seal to the charter. Floreat Etona! The king finally settled that his royal foundation at Eton should consist of ten Fellows, a Master of the School, ten Chaplains, an Usher of the School, ten Clerks, seventy Scholars, sixteen Choristers, and thirteen Alms or Beadsmen, whose particular duty it was to pray for the health and prosperity of the Founder; in all 132 persons. Henry designed his school to be a seminary for a college in one of the Universities. King's College, Cambridge, founded in 1441, was, therefore, the completion of his work. It was to be to Eton what Wykeham's college at Oxford was to Winchester. King's College was to consist of a Provost and seventy Fellows and Scholars to be elected from Eton College.[1]

No one has ever reproached Henry VI. with having too little faith, therefore it is well to notice that his faith made him kind in advance of his age. He could not bear to be a cause of blood-shedding, and the barbarities of the time filled him with horror.

[1] *History of the Colleges of Winchester, Eton, and Westminster*, etc., pp. 18, 19.

Once, when coming from St. Alban's, he saw, on his entrance into London, the quarters of a traitor against his crown displayed over Cripplegate, which was then one of its principal approaches. He ordered the mutilated body to be taken away, with these words: "I will not have any Christian so cruelly handled for my sake".[1]

The civil wars, into which he was drawn for self-defence, were as foreign to his nature as anything could possibly be. He had not his father's strong hand, and although he reigned for forty years, it may be questioned whether he ever governed at all. An infant at his father's death, twenty years passed away before he had arrived at even youthful maturity. Then, when he began to be a king, a fatal malady furthered the designs of his enemies. Every circumstance of his life combined to snatch from him a crown, which, as he said, had been worn by both his father and his grandfather. His defective title, his malady, the long regency of the Duke of Bedford, the general instability of the time, tended to make the reign of a truly pious king null and void for the Church. Moreover, according to the ancients there was one thing which the Supreme Being Himself could not do, and that was to unmake what He had made.[2] Kings are not the only people who find it

[1] *History of the Colleges of Winchester, Eton, and Westminster*, etc., p. 6.

[2] Compare, *Agathon* quoted by Aristotle, and Sophocles, *Trachiniæ*, 744.

so. Henry VI. was hampered, or allowed himself to be hampered by *Præmunire*, for he could not unmake the evil creations of former kings. *Præmunire* interfered, as it was meant to do, with the Pope's freedom of action, and often entailed stormy or contested elections. In 1426, the Archbishopric of York being vacant, the usual *congé d'élire* was addressed to the Dean and Chapter of York by the Government, requiring them to postulate Philip Morgan, Bishop of Worcester. The Pope's candidate was Fleming, Bishop of Lincoln, and this the Pope notified to the Council of Regency, who forthwith accused Fleming of incurring the penalties of *Præmunire*. The matter was finally compromised by the election of Kemp, Bishop of London. The king's uncle, Cardinal Beaufort, had fallen under the same statute by accepting his dignity from Martin V. The letter of the law was, however, not carried out against him when he returned to England in 1429. Again in 1433, the Bishop of Worcester dying at Basle in attendance upon the General Council, therefore *in Curia*, the Pope exercised his right of nominating a successor in the person of the Dean of Salisbury. The Dean was warned that his acceptance would involve him in *Præmunire*; and a *congé d'élire* was addressed to the convent of Worcester. On this occasion the royal candidate was Thomas Bouchier, future Archbishop of Canterbury.[1] Henry VI., then a boy of eleven, may certainly not

[1] Hook, *Lives of the Archbishops of Canterbury*.

have taken a very prominent part in these nominations, yet they were done in his name in virtue of royal *consuetudines* which he did not venture to overthrow, although he sometimes disregarded them.

In the adversity which fell upon Henry's last troubled years as king, he made for himself a staunch friend in William Waynfleet, who became Bishop of Winchester in 1447, in succession to Cardinal Beaufort. On Henry's first visit to Winchester, he found Waynfleet as Provost, and was so struck by his administration that he set the Winchester master over his own royal foundation at Eton. Waynfleet was himself the founder of Magdalen College, Oxford. A devoted adherent of both Henry and Margaret of Anjou, he would doubtless have become primate in 1454, on the death of Archbishop Kemp, if the king's power and favour had been in their normal state. Already the crown and sceptre were passing away from the House of Lancaster. The act of transition cost England many bloody battles, and Henry of Windsor his life.

CHAPTER X.

WARS OF ROSES: CAUSE AND RESULT (1455-1509).

THE Wars of the Roses constitute one of those periods which, apparently, full of lawlessness, cruelty, and blood-shedding, are, in reality, fraught with consequences not to England alone, but even to Christendom. There is, perhaps, an analogy between the Papal Schism and this civil war, but the consequences show the wide difference between a divine and an earthly kingdom. In England, tyranny followed upon the rival claims of two conflicting royalties, a tyranny foreign to the national character which did not strengthen the cause of monarchy. In the Papacy, on the contrary, the monarchical authority of the Pope, over and above the General Council, was more clearly proved by the very trial which, humanly speaking, should have overthrown it.

Edward the Fourth's reign has been called the new monarchy, and it was so to a certain extent. The House of York was less of a constitutional monarchy than the House of Lancaster. The Tudors were scarcely constitutional at all: they made their will law, and that they succeeded in an

attempt so at variance with the genius of the country is largely owing to the conflict of the Roses. The tradition created by the civil horrors of 1455-1472 was the tolerance of any grievance so long as it was inflicted by a strong royal hand, whose hold on the sceptre no man could dispute. The new monarchy created a new nobility, who were subservient to their creators. The old feudal lords remained for the most part on the bloody battle-fields, never more to rise, and those who survived received a death-blow of another sort from the policy of Henry Tudor.

A mere fragment of the old Baronage remained :[1] the Statute of Liveries consummated what the Roses had left undone, and, finally, broke the feudal power. The Battle of Towton, in 1461, at which the losses were reckoned at 36,776 men,[2] of purely English blood, decided the fortunes of the White Rose, whilst Tewkesbury, or rather the cold-blooded assassination of Prince Edward, dispelled the last hope of his mother, Margaret of Anjou, 1471. Henry's reign ended on 4th March, 1461, although he himself lingered for many years a prisoner in the Tower.

The man who succeeded Archbishop Kemp as Primate was enthroned at Canterbury in 1455, the very year of the first battle between the Roses, and he occupied the see under four kings and two

[1] Green, *History of the English People*, p. 284.

[2] Habbington, *Reign of Edward IV.*, p. 433.

changes of dynasty. Archbishop Bouchier was descended from the youngest son of Edward III., and consequently of royal blood. His part seems to have been one of conciliation. He was himself a Yorkist, yet, as long as he could, he maintained loyalty to King Henry. The situation was, in fact, one which might have puzzled a subtle casuist. The White Rose had the prior claim, and on the death of Richard, Duke of York, its representative was a young man in the pride and strength of youth. The Red Rose had been more than half-a-century in possession, but its crown was worn by a king incapable, through illness, of personal government. Edward of York had not Henry's ardent piety, nor his domestic virtues, yet he was the man to grapple with difficulties that baffled weaker organisations. A compromise was effected (1460) through the instrumentality of Archbishop Bouchier, by which it was agreed that Henry was to hold the crown for his life, and to be succeeded by the Duke of York. Under ordinary circumstances it might possibly have been carried out, but Henry was subject to periodical attacks of a malady which affected his mind. This, and the fortunes of war, were against him, and when, in 1461, Edward, no longer contented with the title of protector, aimed at the throne, Bouchier made no difficulties about crowning him. The attitude of Pius II., on learning Edward's accession, was studiously cautious. He had always favoured Henry.

Nevertheless, his legate, Francesco Copini, had incurred his displeasure for excommunicating the opponents of the House of York. Unless directly appealed to, the Holy See would not interfere. Sixty years of possession could not alter the original flaw in the Lancastrian title, yet the Church has ever regarded an anointed prince with veneration. This feeling, largely shared by the people, may account for Henry's long captivity in the Tower. Moreover, his goodness had endeared him to them; to the last he was beloved.

Although the coronation of Edward IV. took place in 1461, many years passed before he was firmly seated on the throne. The alternating fortunes of the Roses kept the country breathless with agitation. In 1470 Henry was replaced on the throne by the exertions of the Earl of Warwick in displeasure at Edward's marriage with Elisabeth Woodville. At one moment England saw two rival queens claiming and enjoying the privilege of Sanctuary; the only place where wearied royalty might rest. Just before the battle of Tewkesbury, Morton, Bishop of Ely, conveyed Queen Margaret to the Benedictine Monastery at Cerne, whence she removed to Beaulieu, a Cistercian house, for greater security. About the same time the Prince of Wales, of the White Rose, was born in Sanctuary at Westminster, with the Abbot and Prior for his godfathers (1471). Elisabeth Woodville's crown was scarcely less full of anguish than that of Margaret. On

Edward's death she again took shelter in Sanctuary, and only parted from the Duke of York, her second son, on the plighted word of Cardinal Bouchier that no harm should come to the prince. "If you resign your son to us," he had said to the Queen, in the name of the Council, "I will pawn my body and soul for his safety."[1] The tragedy of the poor children, who were left to the mercy of their uncle, was an episode in keeping with the unsettled times. The Archbishop, nominated a cardinal in 1467, did not fail in his trust, but he was deceived in Richard. Elisabeth's instincts had been perfectly true. The rumour of illegitimacy, without in the least justifying Richard's base deed, possibly explains his daring to attempt it, but if the two little princes had, indeed, been illegitimate, there was no reason for destroying them. It is difficult to conceive that Bouchier knew their fate when he consented to crown Richard III., a coronation which had been prepared for Edward V. From a popular prince Richard became an unpopular and despotic king. His title, resting as it did on a double murder, was too base even for that time inured to deeds of blood. The short years of reign, for which he perjured his soul, are, however, a fitting closing episode of the Roses. The hand of Cardinal Archbishop Bouchier ratified the act of those who had picked up Richard's crown as it fell on the field of Bosworth, and set it on Henry's head. He crowned yet another king, and lived

[1] Hook, v. 372.

long enough to "hold the posie on which the white rose and the red were tied together" (1486).[1]

Already the new monarchy of Edward IV. had foreshadowed the Tudor reign. Parliament had been summoned nearly every year under the Lancastrian kings. It was merely a name under Edward IV.: the Upper House was passing away by deaths on the battle-field and confiscation, the Lower was ignored. If Edward wanted subsidies, he did not petition Parliament. He took more personal and prompter measures. The Long Parliament under Charles I. went back for precedent to the Lancastrian dynasty, considering the tactics of the new monarchy as unconstitutional, consequently *non avenu*. The Yorkists were usually victorious on the battle-field, and victory meant wealth to Edward. After the single battle of Towton a bill of attainder stripped "twelve great nobles and more than a hundred knights and squires of their estates to the king's profit".[2] Each success was in proportion. Added to this, nearly a fifth part of the land was in the royal possession at one time or another, from which it will be seen that the sinews of war supplied by the Roses enabled Edward to dispense with appeals to Parliament. The people at large were not in their normal state, but quivering and palpitating from the wounds of civil strife and general insecurity; they were ready to be lulled to sleep in strong arms, un-

[1] Hook, v. 384.

[2] Green, *History of the English People*, p. 287.

conscious of their ultimate destination. The Tudor spy-system, the rack in the Tower, and their abuse of the royal prerogative were all proper developments of Edward IV.'s new monarchy. The secret of Henry VIII.'s absoluteness, of his subjects' abject subservience, must be traced to his grandfather's policy, itself a consequence of the Wars of the Roses.

The great invention of the printing-press was introduced in 1476 by Caxton, a Kentish man. It may be likened to the discovery of a new continent. Polite society at that time was not in the habit of reading, but the printing-press was to bring the blessing or the curse of books within the reach of every man. Edward IV. patronised Caxton, who was the single literary glory of his reign. The arts of peace were scarcely at home in that troubled period, nor could they be fully appreciated by those who were born of the Roses only to fall under the tyranny of the Tudors.

It was the custom of the times for parents of the middle classes to place their daughters in the households of great ladies, as a sort of polite education. Sons in their early youth received the same kind of training, and thus it is that we find Thomas More in the household of Cardinal Morton, Archbishop of Canterbury in succession to Bouchier (1486). Morton, no less than Warham after him, encouraged the new learning, and his influence impressed itself indelibly upon Thomas More's youthful mind. A synod in St. Paul's held in 1486, at which Morton

presided, shows indirectly the consequence of long wars and general instability on the clergy of London.[1]

The cold, calculating character of Henry VII. did not act as a stimulus in any direction, and yet he gave the best of his heart, such as it was, to the service of God. There is more warmth about his acts of devotion than about his family affections. His grief for the loss of his good queen, Elisabeth (1503), was said to be great, but it could hardly have been deep, as he lost no time in thinking how to replace her. Matrimonial negotiations were lengthy and he himself in failing health. Ferdinand of Spain, the royal father of Catherine of Aragon, was bargained with as if he had been a common shopkeeper, the ware in question being the Princess Dowager of Wales. After Prince Arthur's death (1502), Henry VII. would not allow her to return to Spain. He wanted her to become the wife of Prince Henry and yet would not make up his unroyal mind till he had cast his eyes round Europe to see if he could command better terms at some other court. The princess herself did not wish to contract a second marriage in England.[2] Henry VII. was not the man to neglect what would have invalidated that marriage, when, after much halting and many ter-

[1] *Jo. Mortoni Arch., vita obitusque*, Budden, p. 34: "Clerum Londinensem, quod vestibus molliter lasciviret, togisque clausis non pro more uteretur, frequentius quam decebat sobrios, sederet et perpotaret".

[2] Lingard, *History of England*, p. 333.

giversations, it was finally decided upon. The papal dispensation was duly obtained (1505), and Henry and Catherine were affianced. The marriage did not take place during the lifetime of Henry VII., for, it would seem, the most ignoble of reasons—a money question. Ferdinand had paid only half Catherine's dowry, and Henry held the bride-elect in fast keeping as a surety.[1] The history of this marriage belongs indeed to the following reign.

The king's mother was the holy Countess of Richmond, who became in 1502 the penitent of John Fisher, afterwards Bishop of Rochester and Cardinal. Her influence over the mind of Henry VII. is undoubted. She took the "Order of Widowhood" during the lifetime of her last husband,[2] and set an example of personal piety and ascetic life closely followed by Catherine of Aragon. Her own son, too, imitated, at least, her faith, and has left of it a monument in stone *ære perennius*. Modern worshippers in the chapel of Henry VII. have lost the abiding Presence to which this king had so great a devotion. His ordinary manner of approaching the Sacraments was full of no ordinary piety; "the Sacrament of Penance he received with a marvellous compassion and flow of tears, that at some time he wept and sobbed by the space of three-quarters of an hour. The Sacrament of the Altar he received at Mid-Lent, and again upon Easter Day, with so great

[1] Lingard, *History of England*, p. 328.

[2] Bridgett, *Life of Blessed John Fisher*, p. 20.

reverence that all that were present were astonyed thereat; for at his first enter into the closet where the Sacrament was, he took off his bonnet, and kneeled down upon his knees, and so crept forth devoutely till he came unto the place self where he received the Sacrament."

In Henry's mortal illness, Blessed John Fisher testifies to the same royal faith. He was too weak to receive Communion, and desired his confessor to bring him the "monstrant" that he might at least look upon the Blessed Sacrament. The good father obeyed, "and he with such a reverence, with so many knockings and beatings of his breast, with so quick and lively a countenance, with so desirous a heart, made his humble obeisance thereunto; with so great humbleness and devotion kissed not the self place where the Blessed Body of our Lord was contained, but the lowest part of the foot of the monstrant, that all that stood about him scarcely might contain them from tears and weeping".[1]

Thus, under the pontificate of Archbishop Warham, closed on April 21, 1509, the reign of the first Tudor.

[1] Bridgett, *History of the Holy Eucharist in England*, ii. 217.

CHAPTER XI.

REVIEW OF THE SECOND PERIOD (1066-1509).

POLITICAL unity is the cry of modern Europe, and the goal towards which its powers are tending. It is an outcome of the ages of faith, when men were bound together in unity of belief. God is one, therefore His truth is one, was the conviction of our forefathers, as soon as they had any Christian faith at all. It is comparatively easy to write the varying fortunes of a State that is politically one, or to trace the descent of a race which comes down in an unbroken line of father and son. Up to the end of the second period the historian's task is lightened by the presence of spiritual unity, at which, however, Wycliffe cast the first stone. It will be shown how circumstances widened the breach, and robbed Englishmen of their most precious inheritance. Thus far we may say *laus ejus in ecclesia sanctorum.*

The relations of Church and State began to come into prominence at the Conquest. As far as Saxon royalty was tried in the crucible of power, it showed a friendly spirit towards the Church, whereas the Norman kings created that hostile thing which is called the State. The worldly wise and the worldly powerful are aggressive, and whilst William the

Conqueror was personally pious, he founded a tradition unknown to Saxon times. An exaggerated view of the royal prerogative was at the bottom of the conflict which he and his successors waged against the spiritual power.

The close connection between Church and State follows the rule of all human things, and is not a pure good. The true priesthood according to the Order of Melchisedech should be, as he was, free from the ties of flesh and blood. The very generosity of sovereigns and of the faithful produced unfavourable results in so far as it induced many men to enter the Church for the sake of a career. The same objection has been seen to work, is working now, in the State establishment, which Queen Elizabeth called into being. It is of far less consequence in a human institution, which is founded on marriage and the natural virtues. Where it tells with vital force is in the ranks of men whose vocation it is to be higher than the angels, to offer up the Sacrifice of the New Law, to live in daily communion with the Holy of Holies. When the worldly minded aspire to this life because through the position occupied by the Church it offers them a career, they speedily constitute the human element from which scandals come. In so vast a body as the clergy in England, many were Angli rather than *angeli*, chiefly because they embraced a life of perfection as means to an end—for the satisfaction of worldly ambition.

The riches of the English sees were founded on the grants of land which the munificence of either prince or individual had conferred upon them. It must be remembered that all through the first and second period, money was represented by land, and, to a very great extent, by land only. The second period added to the already existing sees, Chichester 1070, Bangor 1092, Ely 1109, Carlisle 1133, whilst the existing see of Dorchester was transferred to Lincoln 1067.[1]

There was unity of worship and of sacrifice: all partook of one spiritual food. The Mass was the great act of sacrifice round which everything else converged. We are familiar with the old Norman church, which has come down to us from our ancestors. Let us picture to ourselves, if we can, those structures, not as now, chill and white-washed, but full of the fragrance of the living Presence. Besides the daily Mass, which was as the rising of the sun in the worship of our forefathers, the "psalmody of the Divine Office continued uninterrupted even in the smaller parish churches".[2] The magnificent liturgy of the Church, blending together the psalms of the old law with the wisdom of the Cross conveyed in the new, was thus within reach of all. To-day we have hardly put off our penal apathy of ceremonial, and we could find it in our hearts to envy the liturgical abun-

[1] Godwin, *De Præsulibus Angliæ.*

[2] Bridgett, *History of the Holy Eucharist in Great Britain*, ii. 159.

dance of those days. In all cathedral churches it was usual to sing a votive Mass of our Lady every day at an early hour,[1] and in some places the Jesus' Mass, *i.e.*, in honour of the Holy name, was said. At Winchester, our Lady's Mass used to be known as *Pekismasse* from the celebrant's name.[2] Protestants, who have abolished the notion of sacrifice, persist in construing the mass so offered into idolatry; whilst Catholics know full well that, whereas Mass is always said to God alone, the intention of the Holy Sacrifice may be directed to the honour of our Blessed Lady and the Saints.

The order of the Mass was according to one of the five English Uses. Every age unfolds the unity of the Church. *Now* we have the single Roman missal in England, except in the rites of particular religious Orders. Some, without having a rite, follow their own calendar. *Then* the various English Uses derived their origin from Rome, and whilst differing in detail, were one in their structural form and order.[3] The Mass and the Divine Office were the two great acts of prayer in which the devotion of those times centred. The daily assistance at Mass was part of the national life. To multiply Mass, and to procure its merits for their souls,

[1] Bridgett, *History of the Holy Eucharist in Great Britain*, ii. 165.

[2] Ackermann, *Winchester College*, p. 25.

[3] *Dublin Review*, October, 1891. The Cultus of the Blessed Virgin as contained in the *Sarum Breviary*, p. 375.

whether in this world or the next, was the great aim of our forefathers in the faith.

The institution of chantries grew out of this deep appreciation of the Holy Sacrifice. They consisted of an aisle or altar set apart for a foundation of Masses, mainly for the dead. Our ancestors understood the privilege of giving an alms to God through those holy souls, and of thus, under God's Providence, enriching the treasury of the Church. All prayer for the dead is applied *per modum suffragii*. Very possibly the rich man's gold helps the soul of the poor man whom he has defrauded, for all money paid into that treasury is weighed in the balance of the sanctuary. Chantries increased rapidly in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Henry VIII. suppressed 2374, and then, with curious inconsistency, founded one himself.[1] There were fifty chantries at St. Paul's at the time of the dissolution. A chantry foundation averaged £5 a year, which was a frugal maintenance, even in those days. The chantry priest, except in cases when he was also an ankret,[2] as anchorites used to be called, usually added other avocations to his special duty, assisting the parish clergy in choir for the psalmody of the Divine Office, acting as village schoolmaster, or master of the town grammar school. It is easy to conceive that even foundations instituted in the spirit of faith may be abused, and that pious men

[1] Bridgett, ii. 157.

[2] Rock, *Church of our Fathers.*

and women, intent only on the Church suffering, should thus have opened the ranks of the priesthood to some who thought more of their own maintenance than of the Church militant. Unless a chantry priest were a holy man or a studious one, it is obvious that he was open to many temptations. In the same way funerals were liable to be made opportunities for vain display. St. Augustine says that all accessories help departed souls only very indirectly by moving those who witness them to pity. The body of a great personage was not uncommonly kept unburied for a month, during all which time prayers were unceasingly offered up for the soul. There was a reaction against funeral pomp even before Blessed Thomas More's quaint *Supplication of Souls*. A request to "bury me within three days" is sometimes found in the records of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.[1] Occasionally a stronger term is used. Sir Lewis Clifford, dying in 1404, orders that his "wretched carrion may be buried in the furthest corner of the churchyard," and that "no stone" be laid, "nor other thing whereby any man may know where my stinking carrion lieth".[2]

The next world was a reality so awful to our forefathers that, as with all those whose spirit of faith is strong, their minds constantly dwelt on

[1] *Vetusta Testamenta* and *Testamenta Eboracensia*, *passim*.

[2] *Vetusta Testamenta*, i. 164. He was an ancestor of Lord Clifford of Chudleigh. He had been seduced by the Lollards, but afterwards repented.

purgatory. They had a deep conviction that sin must be followed by punishment either here or there. So far from breeding contempt, their familiarity with the holy mystery of the Incarnation, which is a peculiar grace of Mass, only made them realise the more what a terrible thing it is to fall into the Hands of the Living God.

The privilege of Sanctuary was attached to the Church in very early times. In his defence of the wretched Eutropius, St. Chrysostom offers a notable instance of it. Certain crimes were exempted from the privilege and yet it was no doubt often misused by malefactors. During the Wars of the Roses Sanctuary sheltered the rival queens, Elisabeth Woodville and Margaret of Anjou, but those royal misfortunes were almost the last to profit by an institution which belonged to the ages of faith. Under Henry VII. the Holy See restricted Sanctuary,[1] and under his successor it shared the fortunes of the Catholic religion itself, and was proscribed.

The Recluses, or Ankrets, were also called into being by the Blessed Sacrament. From the beginning the impulse after the solitary life has been very marked. God's grace withdrew men from the world into places where they could be physically alone. Hermits and cenobites represent this movement of the One Spirit. The Recluses, on the

[1] Wilkins, *Concilia, Bull of Pope Innocent VIII.* 1487, *to Henry VII.*, iii. 621.

contrary, were walled up in the midst of populous cities. Most commonly their cell was built on to a church, and its narrow window enabled them to look at the altar, which contained the well-spring of their supernatural strength. This life was practised by laymen and laywomen, and by priests and monks. In the case of religious the leave of the superior had to be obtained in order that the monk might "go up higher". The recluse's time was strictly divided between prayer and manual labour, and he was supported by the alms of the faithful. This special vocation to solitude became at last a state recognised by the Church for which the bishop's sanction was necessary. In the calling of both hermit and recluse the first step was made by taking the habit, and repeating in presence of the bishop the words: "I, N., not wedded, promise and avow to God, and to our Lady St. Mary, and to all the saints of heaven, in the presence of you, Reverend Father in God, N., bishop of N., to live in perpetual chastity, after the rule of St. Paul, the first hermit, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen." It may be mentioned incidentally that the hermit was frequently engaged in the humblest manual labour. He mended and repaired roads and bridges, which was then looked upon as a sort of charitable work. Old wills contain bequests for the purpose. The love of God urged men to do gratuitously what is now performed grudgingly by the lowest menials of the State,

those who eat the bread of poverty in Poor Law houses.

The walling up of a recluse constituted his profession, and was the second and final step. After rigorous and mature testing of his vocation, the bishop or the bishop's delegate led him out to the cell, and whilst the recluse took possession of it the choir sang the antiphon, "*In paradisum deducant te angeli*". The office of Extreme Unction was recited, likewise the Commendation of the Soul and the first part of the burial service. A grave inside the cell was opened and the anchorite laid himself in it, intoning the words: "This is my rest for ever and ever. Here will I dwell, for I have chosen it." The bishop cast earth on the body, then raising the anchorite from the grave, he gave him a last word of advice and left the cell. The door was immediately walled up and sealed.[1]

The anchorite was literally buried with Christ in God. For woman the life offered some special dangers, both as regards body and soul. The strain on her finer nervous organisation would be more severe and the temptation to give good advice to others, which occasionally lapsed into gossiping, was evidently a besetting trial. Yet, on the whole, the recluses of both sexes were faithful to their vocation,[2] and an odour of sweetness to the Church militant in England. The narrow cell did not beget narrow-mindedness, as unbelievers who might consider the

[1] *Hist. of the Holy Eucharist*, ii. p. 181. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 194.

burying alone, without Christ, would certainly contend. Juliana of Norwich inhabited the Anchorage in the east part of St. Julian's Churchyard, Norwich, called also Carrow, because it was given by King Stephen to the so-called Benedictine Nuns of that place, who educated the higher classes. Alban Butler says that Juliana was a Benedictine, and this she may have been in the first instance. The Anchorage at St. Julian's was in all probability supported by the nuns. In 1362 Henry, Duke of Lancaster, granted in trust to the Abbot of Whalley lands and cottages for the support of two recluses at the church of Whalley, as also of two maid-servants. They were to pray for the souls of the duke, his ancestors and heirs. The Anchorage at St. Julian's was tenanted up to 1534 at least.[1]

Mother Juliana wrote her Revelations about 1370, when she was herself thirty years old. They breathe forth the Psalmist's *latum mandatum Tuum nimis*, "for the fulness of joy is to behold God in all".[2]

Just as the cell of the ankret was attached to the Church, so is the virginal life inseparably linked with the Sacrifice and the adorable Sacrament of the Altar. Centuries of lively faith in that central dogma had peopled England with monasteries and religious houses. At the beginning of the sixteenth century they were in this proportion. Benedictines,

[1] Preface to *Revelations of Mother Juliana*, p. 18.

[2] *Revelations of Divine Love, shewed to a Devout Anchoress*, p. 111.

82; Benedictine off-shoots, *viz.*, Cistercian, 75; Cluniacs, 21; Austin Canons, 170; White Canons (Premonstratensians), 31; Gilbertine Canons, 24; Carthusians, 9. Then as to the orders of Friars, the Franciscans (Grey Friars) possessed 62 houses; the Dominicans (Black Friars), 56; the Carmelites (White Friars), 51; the Augustinians, also distinguished by their black habit, and sometimes called Black Friars, 46.[1] The houses of Knights' Hospitallers were very numerous. The Trinitarians, who were often called Red or Maturin Friars, possessed 11 houses in England at the time of the Dissolution.[2] Some of these houses, though fewer than is generally supposed, were immediately subject to the Holy See, *ad Romanam Ecclesiam nullo medio pertinentes.*[3] There were 132 houses of nuns, belonging to various orders, amongst them the royal abbeys of Shaftesbury and Syon.

Besides these numerous men and women in religious houses, the Order of Widowhood received a special consecration from the Church. Matthew Paris mentions a certain Cecilia who, in presence of St. Edmund of Canterbury, made a vow of chastity in her widowhood, and received from him the marriage ring with a gown *de russeto*.[4] Lord Pembroke,

[1] Gasquet, II. Appendix v. and I. Appendix.

[2] *Catholic Directory*, 1st edition, p. 810.

[3] *Electionis Formula. Registrum Abbatiæ Johannis Whethamstede secundæ*, p. 10.

[4] *Chronica Major*, v. p. 235.

dying in 1469, reminds his wife in his will that "ye remember your promise to me, to take the ordre of wydowhood, as ye may be the better mayster of your owne, to perform my wylle, and to helpe my children, as I love and trust you". And again: "Wife, pray for me, and take the said ordre that ye promised me as ye had in my lyfe, my hert and love".[1]

Contemporary chronicles give us an insight into the daily life at the greater monasteries. At the Cistercian abbey of Meaux, in Yorkshire, there was an infirmary for laymen. The abbey servants numbered forty. Hugh, the fifteenth abbot, set up a new crucifix in the lay brothers' choir. Its sculpturer, out of reverence, worked at it only on Friday, and then fasted on bread and water. This crucifix became an object of great veneration, and women were allowed access to the choir in order to visit it.[2] Another Cistercian house, that of Boxley in Kent, was remarkable for its crucifix. The Rood of Boxley was fashioned with screws and wires, not to deceive the faithful, but to remind them in a more lively manner of the Passion. One of the last royal offerings made to the Rood of Grace, as it was called, was that of Henry VII. in 1492.[3]

Charity towards lepers was another fruit of the personal love of our Lord, which is fed by the Holy Sacrifice. Leper houses were built all over the land,

[1] *Vetusta Testamenta*, i. p. 304.

[2] *Annales de Melsa*, iii. p. 36.

[3] Bridgett, *Blunders and Forgeries*, p. 165.

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and although the nature of the disease required isolation, the Church met the leper case with special alleviations. It is probable that most large monasteries had their own leper house.[1]

In England, as elsewhere, the institution of Corpus Christi gave great impetus to a devotion already deeply rooted in English hearts. Pope John XXII. extended this feast, which originated at Liége, in Belgium, during the thirteenth century, to the Universal Church in 1316, and it became known in England between 1320 and 1325. Before and after Corpus Christi mark epochs in the Church. Before it the cultus of the Blessed Sacrament was restricted to Mass and Communion, although the Holy Eucharist was reserved from the earliest times. The place selected in England for reservation was at first the porch or sacristy, sometimes the church itself, later on the chancel. In course of time guilds of Corpus Christi were formed with altars and side chapels, but these were not used for reservation. The Blessed Sacrament was enclosed in a hanging pyx, as in Belgium.[2] The use of a tabernacle was desired by Cardinal Pole, but never carried out in Catholic times. Benediction is a rite of much later date, and was absolutely unknown to our forefathers. The great act of worship introduced by Corpus Christi was the procession of the Blessed Sacrament. Henry V. in his chivalrous piety made it a crime of

[1] See in Dugdale the account of that of Reading Abbey, p. 419.

[2] Bridgett, *History of the Holy Eucharist*, ii. p. 85.

high treason for a layman to touch even the box or vessel "which the precious Sacrament is in,"[1] and Henry VII. provided by will pyxes of silver and gilt for every parish church "within this our realm, every of the said pyxes to be of the value of four pounds".[2] Old wills furnish abundant testimony to the same devotion. Edmund Verney, dying in 1494, orders his executors to cause a lamp to be continually maintained burning in the chancel of the Friar Preachers' church at Warwick before the Host. John, Duke of Exeter (1447), bequeaths to the high altar of St. Katherine's church beside the Tower, "a cup of berill, garnished with gold, pearls, and precious stones, to put the Holy Sacrament in"; also "a gold chalice and other ornaments".[3]

Changes of discipline in three out of the seven Sacraments are noticeable. In the first place, Confirmation was administered when practicable immediately after baptism up to the thirteenth century. The Synod of Worcester (1240) required parents to see that their children were confirmed in the year of their birth, and the Synod of Oxford (1287) imposed a fast every Friday on bread and water upon parents of children who had completed their third year without having been confirmed.[4]

I have spoken, in another place, of the gradual

[1] Bridgett, ii. p. 101.

[2] *Testamenta Vetusta*, i. p. 35.

[3] *Ibid.*, pp. 421 and 256.

[4] Chardon, *Histoire des Sacrements*, p. 175.

disuse of the chalice for the laity.[1] From the very beginning, and at all times, Communion under one kind only has been given to the sick.[2] Moreover, discipline has altered as to the manner of receiving the Blessed Sacrament. The early Fathers speak of the faithful taking the "Lord's Body" into their hands, and, as a matter of fact, this was done as far as the Sacred Species is concerned up to the ninth century.[3] By that time the first fervour of the Christian people, and the ardour engendered by the ages of persecution, had passed away, and the action of the Church in setting stronger safeguards round her most precious treasure is typical of the period when love was growing cold, and Communions becoming scarce. The present mode of giving Communion was, therefore, adopted. The faithful no longer received the Holy Eucharist in the palm of their hand, but on their tongue. During the second period the nearest approach to frequent Communion in England seems to have been weekly Communion. Matthew Paris mentions an instance of it in a girl who lived on the Blessed Sacrament alone.[4] The rules of various religious orders show the practice of the day, which was Communion at the four chief feasts, or eight times a year.[5] This is sufficiently indicated by

[1] See chapter ii. of Second Period.

[2] Chardon, p. 279.

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 261.

[4] *Chronica Major*, p. 101.

[5] See amongst others the *Bridgettine Rule*, *History of Syon Abbey*, Aungier.

the celebrated decree of the Fourth Lateran Council in 1215, which ordered the faithful to approach the Sacraments of Penance and the Holy Eucharist at least once a year, at Easter, or thereabouts.[1]

The Penitential Code of Archbishop St. Theodore (669) seems to have shaped the penitential system in the Western Church.[2] It contained the principle of commutation, and that in subsequent centuries finally superseded canonical penances. Canon Law has to provide for any exigency, and although to the ignorant it may seem cut and dry, or worse, to set down a particular punishment for every sin known to human corruption, the Code aimed at removing the responsibility of the individual confessor. In process of time, and not, it seems, before 1100, canonical penances came to be commuted. Instead of so many years' rigorous fasting, the sinner was allowed the resource of flagellation and almsgiving. Money fines for some charitable object became a favourite mode of penance,[3] and vows of crusade, in the days of chivalry, another, until the sterner canonical penances lingered only in the punishment of heretics and of notorious sinners. Jane Shore held a post which might have been less in favour if to it had been attached the penance of walking barefooted through the streets of London, dressed in a sheet, and carrying a lighted taper. This she was compelled to do towards the end of the fifteenth

[1] Hefele, *Geschichte der Concilien*, v. 793.

[2] Chardon, p. 387. [3] *Ibid.*, p. 625.

century, after the death of Edward IV. There is no similar record of Fair Rosamund. The walking barefooted and lightly clad was a feature in the processes for heresy during the fifteenth century.

The Twenty-first Decree of the Fourth Lateran Council with reference to Paschal duties obliges the faithful to confess their sins at least once a year to their own priests, *viz.*, their parish priests (*sacerdos proprius*). If any one had a good reason for wishing to confess to another priest, the leave of his parish priest had to be obtained.[1] The rise of the Friars changed the spirit, though not the letter, of the law. Twelve years after this Decree the Dominicans obtained from the Holy See a Bull, enabling them to hear confessions in England. In 1265 a similar privilege was conferred upon the Franciscans.[2] It is needless to say that the measure was never popular with parish priests, although so largely productive of good for souls. The Lateran Decree was maintained for the Paschal Duties, and during the rest of the year liberty as to the choice of a confessor was allowed. The Friars were the Jesuits of the Middle Ages, and we ourselves could as ill afford to lose the wisdom of St. Ignatius, as those times to be deprived of a spiritual ministry, which clearly supplied a positive need. Members of the nobility and of the weaker sex specially favoured the Friars. Old wills contain many remembrances of the "Freres," both collectively and individually.

[1] Hefele, v. 793. [2] Chardon, pp. 427, 430.

In those days there was no need of bank holidays as a check upon the serious business of life. The joyful element was largely supplied by the holidays of the Church, and the high pressure so well known to our generation did not exist. The mediæval custom of holding fairs, which were originally synonymous with feasts,[1] threatened to interfere with the due keeping of Sunday. The legislation of Archbishop Arundel shows that he combated the practice of a market or fair held on Sunday in Harrow churchyard, whilst he tolerated purchases made on that day during harvest time for the convenience of the people.[2] The register of the same Archbishop puts the number of holydays of obligation at forty-eight in 1400.[3]

Guilds formed an important feature in English mediæval life. They represented trade, municipality, good-fellowship, a sort of social voluntaryism, all founded on the Catholic religion. They were of three kinds: political, ecclesiastical, and secular, although in those ages the word "secular" as we understand the *thing* did not exist. Religion was prominent in all gatherings, and up to the Apostasy even the most secular guild closely resembled a religious confraternity. The in-coming Lord Mayor of London took his oath on the book of the Gospels

[1] *Historia de Abingdon*, ii. Preface.

[2] *History of the Holy Eucharist*, ii. p. 235.

[3] Wilkins, *Concilia*, iii.

"with the effigy of Him crucified".[1] The present Livery Companies, that is, the secular guilds, are traced back to the period of Henry II.[2] The Steelyard Merchants and Leather-sellers date from Saxon times. The political or frith guilds represented the municipal element as the secular guilds did merchants and trade. Other important and very ancient Liveries are the Mercers, the Grocers, the Skinners, the Drapers, the Fishmongers, the Goldsmiths, the Merchant Taylors, a branch of the Drapers. Sixty companies are at present in existence,[3] but they would hardly be recognised by our forefathers. Thus in 1346 the Grocers agreed that every man of the brotherhood should go to St. Anthony's Church in London on the feast of St. Anthony to hear Mass, and should offer a penny to the worship of God, "His blessed moder Marye, St. Anthony, and all saints". The Skinners distinguished themselves in the Corpus Christi procession. "There were borne before them more than 200 priests in surplices and copes, and then the torches of wax burning bright, and above 200 clerks and skinners in their best liveries."[4] The Grocers about the reign of Edward III. appointed a priest to say Mass daily. His salary was raised subsequently to £6 13s. 4d., "beside his yearly charge for bread and wine and candle, for singing Mass 2/-". Each of these companies had a patron saint, a further point of dissimilitude from their

[1] *The City Companies*, Arundell, p. 116.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 23. [3] *Ibid.*, p. 159. [4] *Ibid.*, pp. 120, 121.

descendants, and usually founded altars to that saint, of which they in their corporate capacity were patrons. Thus the Drapers claimed our Lady St. Mary, mother of the "Holy Lamb," and worshipped at St. Mary Bethlem Church, Bishopsgate; the Fishmongers adopted St. Peter, the prince of fishermen, and attended at St. Peter's Church. St. Dunstan was the patron of the Goldsmiths, and St. John the Baptist of the Merchant Taylors. The Leathersellers, again, were under our Lady's patronage. The saint's name often christened the guild. The Grocers were called the fraternity of St. Anthony; the Fruiterers the fraternity of St. Martin; and the Salters and Skinners the societies of Corpus Christi.[1]

The ecclesiastical or religious guilds undertook the exercise of charity on a large scale, visiting the poor and the sick, and prisoners, helping poor scholars, contributing towards the maintenance of schools and the payment of schoolmasters.[2] These various guilds possessed the secret of work, but no less the power of recreation. Their feasts were copious and abundant. They pledged themselves in the loving cup, of which all partook. It is recorded of Archbishop Scrope, the martyred Archbishop of York (1405), that he granted an indulgence of forty days for drinking the loving cup.[3]

The ever-present realisation of the Incarnation

[1] *The City Companies*, Arundell, p. 124.

[2] *English Guilds*, J. Toulmin Smith, p. 85.

[3] Rock, *Church of our Fathers*, ii. 339.

was to our forefathers that perennial source of joy foretold by the prophet,[1] hence their childlike love for the instrument of the Incarnation, whom they were wont to call "our Lady St. Mary". The feast of the Conception of our Lady is said to have been first celebrated in 1122 at the Benedictine Abbey of St. Peter at Gloucester.[2] Glastonbury, the mother of all churches in England, had honoured her spotless virginity from the beginning of the Christian era. Her shrines and sanctuaries, founded either on some legend expressive of the popular mind in her regard, or in thanksgiving for graces received, covered the land. Amongst many other towns Tewkesbury, Canterbury, Worcester, Lincoln, and Evesham were places of resort most dear to our Lady's clients. In or near London, our Lady of Barking, our Lady of Willesden, our Lady of Graces, and our Lady of the Pew or Pue were much frequented shrines. No place, however, was so celebrated as Walsingham. Its priory was founded between 1146 and 1174, and dedicated to our Lady's Annunciation. Austin Canons were in possession of it from its early days, but how it became a pilgrimage is not known. During the thirteenth, fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, our kings, with few exceptions, visited the shrine, and their acts of piety towards our Lady of Walsingham are recorded up to the great apostasy.[3]

[1] "Haurietis aquas in gaudio de fontibus Salvatoris," *Isaias*.

[2] *Historia Sti. Petri Gloucestriæ*, p. 15.

[3] Bridgett, *Our Lady's Dowry*, p. 305.

The image of our Lady near the Tower, that is, our Lady of Barking, is alluded to by Blessed Thomas More as seeming to the citizens' wives to smile upon them,[1] true simile of her influence upon human life.

To induce her to smile upon them our forefathers had recourse to practices which the Englishmen of to-day would deem degrading to their proverbial good sense, simply because the man of mature years has disowned the mother of his youth. Old wills contain numerous bequests of silk and satin "of my best," and of jewels, to particular statues of our Lady.[2] This is how the shrines of our Lady Undercroft, Canterbury, and of Walsingham sparkled with precious stones. They had been fed by the faith and love of generations. The inscription "O Mater Dei memento mei" was a favourite one on bells and tombs.[3] The practice of the Angelus is founded on the use of the Curfew Bell.[4] Archbishop Arundel ordered the same bell to be rung in the morning (1399).[5] It was called the Gabriel Bell, and became a reminder, thrice repeated daily, of the Incarnation.

These practices belong in more or less degree to all lands where our Lady is loved, but the devotion

[1] Bridgett, *Our Lady's Dowry*, p. 313.
[2] *Testamenta Eboracensia*, p. 240.
[3] *Our Lady's Dowry*, p. 216.
[4] *Ibid.*, 216.
[5] Wilkins, *Concilia*, iii. 246.

to her seven joys was particularly English. It was most dear to St. Thomas of Canterbury, and this of itself was a recommendation. Another privilege, which arose in our country, was the scapular. It was at Newenham, Cambridge, that St. Simon Stock had the vision in which he received her little habit from our Lady (1251). He gave it to Edward I., that typical Englishman.

From hyperdoulia we are naturally led to doulia, for besides being the dowry of Mary, England had been the isle of saints. During the period we are now reviewing, St. John the Baptist occupied very much the place in which St. Joseph stands to-day, and it would not be easy to find in England churches dedicated to St. Joseph before the great apostasy.[1] The English of Catholic times were specially devout to their own saints, or to those who had worked for their country, and perhaps less so in proportion to the holy in other lands; but the material difficulty of travelling partly accounts for this. The ideal of holiness was before them, however little it may have been in their lives. That ideal, when resting on God and His saints, will keep the spiritual judgment of men in purity and truth, so that they shall not be deceived by the counterfeit, nor take Judas for St. Peter.

"The biers of the martyrs are nothing else than secure harbours, the sources of spiritual streams, inexhaustible treasures of wealth which are never

[1] I believe there is one in the diocese of Birmingham.

consumed."[1] England possessed three martyr shrines of great splendour: St. Alban's, St. Edmundsbury, and Canterbury. The abbot of St. Alban's took the first place amongst the mitred abbots in Parliament, a privilege granted to him by the English Pope, Adrian IV., 1154, for the dignity of our protomartyr.[2] The whole cathedral church of Canterbury was hallowed by the memory and the glorious body of St. Thomas. As a pilgrimage, it was second only to Rome, Jerusalem, and perhaps to Compostella.[3] The Lollards, in perverting Catholic doctrine, had first introduced the notion that honour paid to the saints was so much deducted from the worship of God. St. Thomas had fallen for the liberties of the Church, and the voice of his bones cried loudly in the same cause. Pilgrims venerated four places in the cathedral. First, the little wooden altar erected on the spot of his martyrdom, called *ad punctum ensis;* secondly, the tomb in the crypt, where his body had rested for fifty years until its translation in 1220; thirdly, the chapel of the Crown of St. Thomas, containing a large portion of the saint's head enclosed in a gold and silver bust. Lastly, there was the shrine itself behind the high altar, to which a flight of steps led up. A Venetian, who visited it in the year 1500, thus describes it: "The tomb of St. Thomas the martyr, Archbishop

[1] *Leaves from St. John Chrysostom*, p. 265.

[2] Alban Butler, i. 831.

[3] Morris, *Life of St. Thomas of Canterbury*, p. 472.

of Canterbury, exceeds all belief. Notwithstanding its great size, it is all covered with plates of pure gold; yet the gold is scarcely seen, because it is covered with various precious stones—as sapphires, balasses, diamonds, rubies, and emeralds; and wherever the eye turns, something more beautiful than the rest is observed. Nor, in addition to these natural beauties, is the skill of art wanting; for in the midst of the gold are the most beautiful sculptured gems, both small and large, as well as such as are in relief—as agates, onyxes, cornelians, and cameos; and some cameos are of such a size, that I am afraid to name it; but everything is far surpassed by a ruby, not larger than a thumb-nail, which is fixed at the right of the altar. They say it was given by a king of France."[1]

These were the last days of faith in the Communion of Saints, and those who laid sacrilegious hands on St. Thomas's shrine also broke down the altar of Sacrifice through the length and breadth of England. The Communion of Saints itself rests on the Holy Catholic Church, and immediately follows it in the Apostles' Creed. From the days of the "Italian Mission" sent by St. Gregory, England received her Orders and Jurisdiction from the Pope. It was the Pope who conferred the Pallium on every metropolitan, and through the metropolitan confirmed the election of every bishop. Thus the spiritualities of each English see were in the hands of St. Peter's

[1] Morris, pp. 474 and following.

successor, and could be exercised only at his bidding. Hierarchies might have failed, would have failed, had it not been for the Central See of Christendom; for in the course of these periods we have seen arbitrary and cringing metropolitans and worldly bishops. Both were held in check by the successors of St. Gregory the Great, who could judge metropolitans and their suffragans alike. Before the British constitution had matured its strong republican element, the Holy See encouraged the liberty of the subject by opposing an undue exercise of the royal power.

"We cry out to the successor of Peter, to the Vicar of the Crucified," wrote John of Salisbury in 1167.[1] How had this cry been made all through the ages of our history?

That first and typical Englishman, St. Wilfrid, twice[2] undertook the journey to Rome in order to obtain the justice which was refused him here. In the eleventh century a great Archbishop of Canterbury, St. Anselm, fought single-handed a depraved king and a whole hierarchy. Rockingham gave him the measure of his brethren in the Episcopate. They would have yielded up their spiritual inheritance at the bidding of William Rufus; therefore spoke the Primate, "I will resort to the Chief Shepherd and the Prince of all".[3] The battle of investitures and of homage, representing the liberty of the Church,

[1] *Johannis Saresberiensis Epistolæ*, p. 25.

[2] His first journey was in early youth for his education.

[3] Rule, *Life of St. Anselm*, ii. p. 58

was won, no thanks to the bishops, but to St. Anselm and St. Peter. A little later another Archbishop, also alone, appealed to the Holy See in almost the very words of St. Anselm. St. Thomas fell, but the cause lived; the hierarchy deserted him to a man. Henry Plantagenet hated where he had once loved. St. Thomas and the Pope saved the Church in England from becoming the handmaid of the State, for at that time the king represented the State. Innocent III., on the other hand, maintained the royal power even when vested in the person of King John, against rebellious barons, whilst it must not be forgotten that Cardinal Stephen Langton, the popular champion, was the Pope's nomination for which England had suffered an interdict.

Again, St. Thomas of Hereford appealed to the supreme tribunal of the Holy See against the summary dealing of his metropolitan. Archbishop Peckham was a great and good man, yet the judgment even of the great and good is liable to err, especially when they have the power of the Archbishops of Canterbury. It may be surmised that a saint is slow to have recourse to a higher tribunal, and that in this case St. Thomas had good grounds for a proceeding, the nature of which has always remained obscure. The fact that death overtook the Bishop of Hereford before his cause could be heard, does not affect the value of his appeal.

The success of Wycliffe and the Lollards was

mainly due to the schism of the West, which weakened for a time the great voice of Peter. That success produced in England the dethronement of Richard II., the successive struggles of rival branches of the royal house, culminating in the Wars of the Roses. When, therefore, our ancestors said, "I believe in the Holy Catholic Church," it was no vain word. There was one only Faith in England, one Sacrifice, one Priesthood, all resting upon the person of Peter, whether he called himself in the words of St. Gregory, "Servant of the Servants of God," or "Bishop of the Catholic Church," [1] that is, Chief Shepherd of Christ's sheep.

[1] A title often used in ecclesiastical documents. See Mansi, *Sacrorum Conciliorum Collectio.*

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